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LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

OF

IRISH LIFE.

BY

MRS. S. C. HALL,

AUTHOR OF "THE BUCCANEER," "UNCLE HORACE," "SKETCHES OF IRISH CHARACTER," &c. &c.

"Erin! the tear and the smile in thine eyes,
Blend like the rainbow that hangs in thy skies."
MOORE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER,
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1838.

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TO

MRS. GROGAN MORGAN,

JOHNSTOWN CASTLE, WEXFORD.

My dear Mrs. Morgan,

I inscribe these Volumes to you, not so much in testimony of private friendship, as because I have been enabled to estimate the excellent example which Mr. Morgan and you give to the gentry of your country.

That you may find many imitators, and yourselves long continue a blessing to your tenantry, —receiving your reward in finding the good seed you have sown perpetually springing up to recompense your unceasing labours for their moral and social improvement—is the fervent prayer of

Your attached Friend,

ANNA MARIA HALL.

Old Brompton,
April 12th, 1838.

INTRODUCTION.

Several of the stories in the second and third volumes of this work have already courted public favour in Periodical Works conducted by my husband. I hope I may consider myself justified in collecting them; and that, in their present form, they will not be deemed an unworthy contribution to a class of literature, which is designed to convey information while affording amusement.

The title was suggested by the publisher: I adopted it with some reluctance, as too nearly resembling that which belongs to one of the most exquisite volumes of modern times. Those,

however, who have read the "Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life," will not, I trust, be displeased with me for following, though at a respectful distance, the example of the eloquent and accomplished Scotchman, and endeavouring to do for my country that which he has done for his;—to make the character of the Irish more extensively known and better understood, to excite a generous sympathy for their sufferings, a kind indulgence towards their faults, and a just appreciation of their virtues.

I have been told, somewhat reproachfully, that I write only of the humbler classes—that my sketches are of peasants and their cabins—and that I neglect altogether the Irish gentry. I can but urge in excuse, that it is only among such we must look for original character; at least, among such only have I found it. The gentry of Ireland differ little, if at all, from that of England. If those who wrote half a century ago were true in their statements, and faithful in their portraits, the habits of the Irish gentlemen have entirely changed; and

with respect to Irish ladies, my readers do not require to be told of their beauty, goodness, and virtue.

It has been always impressed on my mind, that I ought to write for the Irish, as well as for the English, reader; with this feeling I have never hesitated to exhibit and condemn in my countrymen and countrywomen, that which I considered wrong and capable of alteration. To praise is always easy—to censure, seldom agreeable; if I have, at times, seemed to adhere but slightly to the old caution, "be to their faults a little blind," I trust it cannot be said of me, that I have been aught but "to their virtues ever kind."

The songs in this volume have been set to music by Mr. Alexander D. Roche in a manner that does him the highest credit, and entitles him to the warmest thanks of the writer. They are published by Messrs. Duff and Co., 65, Oxford Street.

THE GROVES OF BLARNEY.

PART I.

"The groves of Blarney, they are so charming."

I TAKE it for granted there are few persons in our English world, who have neither seen nor heard of "The Groves of Blarney," so celebrated in history and song. Their celebrity, however, is mainly derived from the virtue possessed by the famous "stone"—which I, by virtue of my privilege, may safely describe as THE GREAT IRISH SMOOTHING-IRON. This magic slab is perched upon the most inaccessible part of the castle; and many risk their necks with a view to polishing the most unruly of all unruly members. Indeed, it would be an admirable speculation to bring over a fragment of the wonder-working granite to

the good city of London, where it would no doubt effect a desirable change in the habits and manners of society in general. After saluting the precious relic, husbands would become positively polite to their wives—and wives would continue as gentle as if still unwed; at public meetings, speakers would greet each other with a "Save ye, sweet gentleman;" and there would be no end to the compliments paid by blustering citizens to their opponents, at Hall or Common Council. Ladies of a certain age would eulogise the loveliness of their younger sisters; men would confess each other handsome; and the streets would resound with the compliments of cads and coachmen. Critics would learn politeness, at the expense of justice; and members of parliament, even in the House of Commons, would remember they were, or ought to be, gentlemen. But as it is probable the stone would lose its power if removed, we venture to recommend that all rude people be compelled by act of parliament to visit it, at least once in their lives and imbibe its virtues.

The following tale is one of strictly domestic interest, and derives its title from an occurrence which took place in the village of Blarney, as nearly as I can ascertain, about the year 1812.

Yet my readers (long acquaintance has made me consider them my friends) may like to know, that Blarney Castle, its groves, and its once picturesque and beautiful village, are about four miles north-west of Cork

For the history and character of the place, I refer them to the details of my friend Mr. Crofton Croker—to whom Ireland is so largely indebted. He has employed rare talents and industry in her cause; and was among the first to direct the attention of England to the vast stores which she possesses,—stores from which profit, information, and amusement may be largely drawn. His name is intimately and honourably connected with his country.

And now to my story. In the immediate neighbourhood of the village of Blarney, there resided a gentleman of large property, who, anxious to promote agriculture, and improve the condition of his tenants, brought over an intelligent and industrious Englishman to superintend his farms, cultivate his lands, and watch over his hot and green-houses.

Mr. Francis Russell had received an excellent education, and understood the habits, feelings, and prejudices of the people, without which knowledge, I very much doubt whether any practical agriculturist can be useful in Ireland.

Moreover he was a Roman Catholic, without being a bigot. The gentleman who had secured so excellent and useful a person to superintend the management of his estate, considered it an advantage that Russell was of the same religious persuasion as those it was his duty to oversee; and he had been long enough in England to know that English Catholicity is divested of all the bitterness with which it is unhappily so frequently associated in the sister country. Francis Russell brought over his wife and two young daughters, the youngest almost an infant, to a very pretty cottage ornée on his employer's estate, adjoining the village, and for a time every thing went on astonishingly to his satisfaction. But, alas! for poor Ireland! I said the gentleman had a large property in the neighbourhood—and so he had; but it was dreadfully embarrassed —not irretrievably so, if he had taken the bee's motto, "economy"—followed Russell's advice, and retrenched: but prudence unhappily formed no part of his kind and generous nature. Nothing could restrain his perverted desire for improvement. He opened mines which he had not the means to work; built a factory—that was never roofed—at the time, too, when the house of his ancestors was

tumbling about his ears; projected roads—saw company—and for every hundred he really received spent a thousand. When he engaged Mr. Russell, he had just raised several thousand pounds by "custodiams," and money was flying in all directions; but days of reckoning came, and nothing to reckon with. As if to increase the unfortunate gentleman's difficulties, his valuable overseer died suddenly, and his wife and their children were left totally without provision; for, relying on his patron's false (unintentionally so) representations, he had given up all other prospects to settle at Blarney. The only thing the ruined gentleman could do, he did—he executed a deed of gift at a peppercorn rent of the pretty cottage (which Russell had fancifully christened "Bee's Nest") to the widow and her girls. Poor man! he did not live very long to see the final result of his mismanagement; and, as if a blight was over all he touched, sickness, aided by sorrow, brought Mrs. Russell to the brink of the grave before her eldest daughter, Margaret, had completed her eighteenth year. Margaret was a genuine English girl, fair and lovely to look upon—gentle and fervent, docile, yet deep-hearted, skilled in the arts of thrifty housewifery, and managing their still pretty cottage and the two

acres of land attached to it with the wisdom of an experienced farmer. The fairy estate chained them to the village of Blarney; and the warm affections bestowed on them by their neighbours rendered the place very dear to the widowed mother. Still poverty came—the cow died;—in truth, I must give another reading of the old tale of "*Auld Robin Gray.*" Margaret —poor Margaret—was at once the sacrifice and the heroine. For the "Jamie" of the song, who would have made the "crown a pound," read that Connor O'Gorman, a handsome Irish youth of twenty, would, in the enthusiastic phraseology of his country, "have walked barefoot through the world to sarve her;" and yet saw her the wife of Hector Lee —a Robin Gray—rich, if not well-favoured, and one whom the "Flower of Blarney" would have been well satisfied to call father. The preface to my tale is little more than a record of deaths. Margaret had hardly written her name Lee instead of Russell, when the parent for whose dear sake she had apparently sacrificed her all of happiness in this world was called to another, and she was left with the charge of a child-like sister, wild as a young fawn of Killarney, and obstinate as a mule.

Flora was sparkling and pretty, and if good-

man Lee (as she always called him) had not been a farmer of as much courtesy as wealth, she would have stood a fair chance of being exiled for her mischief; but the old man bore with everything for the sake of her he loved—I might almost say, worshipped; and when at the end of two years Margaret presented him with a young Hector, it would be utterly impossible to describe his joy. To oblige his wife, he had left his old farm-house, and resided in the cottage she so much loved; and when his child began to walk, he would sit for hours under the shadow of a bower she had trained with English skill, from whence he could see through the deep arch of Blarney-bridge the towers of the old castle. But it pleased God to call the gentle, kind old man to himself before his boy was two years old; and "well-knowing," to use his own words, "that his warnings were for death," after he had received the extreme unction enjoined by his religion, he desired that Margaret might remain with him alone, and taking her soft hand within his horny and withered palms, he said,

"Shade back the curtain, Peggy bawn, for my eyes are dim; there, now I can see ye'r face, just the same as ever, God bless it! My will is made, gra! you have a hundred good acres

at a nominal rint, and not an acre of *bouch-lawns* on the whole—thanks to you for that and everything; two cows and the horse, besides the mare—for your life, and to your own blessed child afther—at your disposal till then, my Peggy; and the long acre fields, as good as twinty acres, at your disposal for ever. But it isn't about *that* I wanted to spake. *My soul is made*, and but for the panting of my heart, like an ould eagle struggling with the chain, I'd be bravely still; 'tis about yerself, Margaret; you'll be the flower of Blarney again in yer widow's cap—just three-and-twenty—and the sun nor the storm never dare look in yer face since I had ye—did they, Peg?

But Peg, as he loved to call her, could not answer for her tears.

"Crying for the ould man?" he continued, as she bent to kiss him; "bless you, darling, bless you! it's the first time the sight of yer tears ever did my heart good. I'm glad you can shed a tear for the ould goodman Lee, for I've seen yer tears before, Peggy, when ye didn't think I did, and *they scalded my heart*, for I knew what they were shed for; there was no sin in them, darlint—no sin, only sorrow—that the May-meadow sweet, and the ould winter ivy, should twist on the one stem;—but, reach me a drink;—thank and

bless you, honey dear. Now, as to yerself; there's Ulick O'Sullivan, Ulick Rhu, and faith (God forgive me for swearing) his head is not redder than his hand, if he had an opportunity —have nothing to say to him, Margaret. I've got my prosperity by minding the laws, and if report speaks true, he's got his by breaking them. He'll want you to marry him—I know he will; —but shun him, for the sake of yourself and our child, Margaret dear; shun them all—all but one—I needn't name him; I don't say, Peggy, that while you were a wedded wife, you thought of him; no, no, he might cross your memory sometimes as a shadow crosses the sky; but when I am in my grave, it is only natural that a young thing like you should take another husband. Connor O'Gorman, dear, loved you—I don't think he loved you as well as I did—I don't think, but I don't know—even now, when the thickness of death is over my eyes, I look at you, and the blessed Virgin, (blessed saints forgive me if I spake sin!) she could hardly be more beautiful or pure than yourself. You were too good for me, and I think you far, far too good for him; and yet, if you love him, you ought to have some reward for spending the flower of your youth with an ould man."

Margaret (and she spoke as she thought at

the time) said she would never marry—never. She had her child to love; she would love nothing else.

But the dying man prevented her continuing in such a strain.

"It would ill become me, Peggy, to be selfish on my death-bed: you have been not only a blessing to me but to the town land, and to every one you came near; and I hope, at the end of a twelvemonth and a day, you'll be quick about thinking of another husband. And, Peggy, Connor loves you, and if you could lay any law upon him, to keep quiet and steady—the sort of thing you like—he would make a good husband. He could have had his pick of the girls in the barony, if he had liked, but, sure, any one who once thought of you could think of no one else! It's a hard thing to part ye, Peggy, if it wasn't God's will; but as it is, why you have my leave and blessing to make yerself happy; only, darlint, the boy—our child—but I needn't tell you to take no one who in the way of all kindness and goodness would not be a father to him. And the ould mare—grey Nelly—don't let Flora taze the life out of the beauty, as she does out of everything else. The hundred pounds I've left her, will buy the neat and tidy odds-and-

ends for a house when she marries, which you English-born think so much of. And when I'm gone, Peggy, I wouldn't like you to forget me—that I would not—and should like you to spake of the ould man by the fire of an evening, or about the farm, and to be kind (as, indeed, you always war) to anything I liked—to think and speak of me, Peg, as of one whose dying breath will be spent in blessing you, and who only wishes he had been more near your own age, that he might have been left long on the world to make you happy. I trust we shall meet again above, jewil. And Margaret, dear, in regard of the funeral, let the people—my people, avourneen—have their own way. You're all for quiet and that, in England, and you don't like the wakes, I know; but somehow, I think it would make all belonging to me very quare and uncomfortable, if I could not go the way all my people did, and have Kate Harrington, the finest and most ancient keener in Cork county, to keen me, — and plenty of everything;—and, dear, don't be hurt at the noise, for it's the more noise the more respect. At my father's funeral (heaven be his bed!) there were more games of 'the walls of Troy'* and 'short castle' played than had been known at any

* Peculiar to wakes.

wake in the country for many a year. And mind, dear, that my head 's turned to the foot of the bed, for your sake, to keep misfortune from the family. I know, Margaret, you've no favour towards these things, but, O think of the ould man, and forgive it—it's the last time he'll trouble you."

Margaret promised, and faithfully performed, all he requested; and having in broken sentences repeated his desire, that at the end of a twelvemonth and a day she should begin to think of another husband, and murmured prayers on prayers for her happiness, and kissed his child, he sunk into a sleep, from which he awoke in about two hours to repeat his blessing on the head of his young wife, and to assure her with his feeble and dying lips that she had never once angered him during their marriage. Flora was then called for and knelt by his bed-side; loudly did she weep, for he had been like a fond father to her ever since her mother's death.

" You give breath to your sorrow, and it flies, Flory," he said; " but my young wife's sorrow settles in her heart. Mind all she says, for I was like an ould red deer of the mountains larning from a little lamb. And remember I bare witness that a loud or sharp word

was what I never heard from your lips, or felt on my heart, Margaret Lee, since the hour the priest—God help him!—declared May and January to be the one month. And, Flora, merry maid," continued the old man, smiling in death, "that's more than your husband will be able to say when ye'r only a day married."

Again the old man slumbered even while the slight jest passed from his lips; and long did Margaret watch him, and more than once move from his cheek the silver hair which the light summer breeze that entered through the casement had disturbed. He laid quite still, and the beams of the setting sun entered the chamber with that noiseless joy which steeps the green hill and valley in hues of happiness. "When he awakes I should like him to see how bright it is," thought Margaret, and she removed the curtain: the eye-lids were half open, the—but details of the gentlest death are painful. Old goodman Lee awoke no more.

Margaret obeyed her husband's desires in all things touching the funeral. Mr. Lee's relations were all more or less disappointed, as relations always are when they are not mentioned according to their own estimation of their own deserts in "the will;" though he had left many small

tokens of regard to those he considered worthy, of course they were not satisfied. But the liberality of the funeral arrangements were such as to admit of no complaint; the favourite keener exerted her talents to the uttermost; she seated herself on the floor, closed her eyes, clasped her hands round her knees, and began first, in a low and monotonous tone, to set forth the domestic and neighbourly virtues of the deceased. Her Irish poetry would bear the following translation:—

"Kind and gentle were you, and lived through frost and snow—sorrow and tears—with an open house and an open heart; the sun of heaven shone on you, and you reflected its beams upon others; the Flower of Blarney saw and loved you;—and though she is of a strange country, you taught her to love the green and weeping Island—to dry the widow's tears—to feed the orphan, to clothe the naked.—

"Oh! why did you die, and leave behind you all the good things of life,—the big barn, the grey mare, the high-trotting horse, the most elegant farm of the town-land, and, above all, the beautiful boy, who will be the young oak of the forest yet. Oh! the justice and the mildness were you of the country's side; and while grass grows

and water runs we will cry for goodman Lee. The beggar walked from his door with a full sack, and he turned wormwood into sweetness with his smile.

" But now his wife is desolate, and his full and plentiful home has no master."—

I know nothing more picturesque than an Irish funeral, when viewed, as all picturesque objects ought to be, in the distance. Mr. Lee had been respected by rich and poor; his good-nature, good-humour, and punctuality in the discharge of his business, had brought their sure reward; and it certainly was with a feeling of pride that Margaret looked, with weeping eyes, from her curtained window, upon the crowd of horse and foot that attended her true and generous friend to his grave. The coffin was placed, after the fashion of the country, on an open hearse, with a coarse canopy, supported by four pillars; the famous keener was seated by the side of the body enveloped in her blue cloak,—and when the motley procession moved on, she commenced her wild chaunt, bending over the coffin, her hood concealing her features with its heavy drapery, her action expressive of the wildest grief, and her voice at times swelling into loud and powerful tones,

which were repeated at intervals by the crowd. When they reached the cross-road, such being considered symbolic of their creed, the procession stopped; the men uncovered their heads, and the priest said a few words of prayer for the repose of the soul of the deceased. Then again Margaret's ear caught the chorus of the death-song, and, in a few more minutes, all view of the funeral was obstructed as it wound round the hill; then Margaret caught her child to her bosom, and wept over him long and bitterly.

THE GROVES OF BLARNEY.

PART II.

"FLORA, will you hold your tongue?"

"Margaret, you have just told me you do not mind a word I say; so what harm can there possibly me in my talking?"

"Oh, none in the world, if it amuses you."

"But it amuses *you*, sister," persisted Flora Russell;—"it amuses you, I am sure it does. What would you do without me? It is now more than eleven months since we have been living in this blessed cottage, like two nuns in a cell, with nothing to enliven us but little Hector; I should have died only for Hector and"—

"Marcus Roche," put in Margaret.

"Well, sister,—there, I do not blush, not one bit, you see—not one bit of blush; and I do confess that Marcus Roche is, as old Monica calls it, 'very divartin.' In the first place, you know

he must be very learned, or Squire Callaghan would never suffer him to instruct his sons, as he does, in English, and French, and writing, and—what is it they call it?—the round thing, you know—oh, the use of the globes, and all that. Then he has taken such pains with me; I really write a very beautiful hand now; and as to accounts, indeed, sister, I can sum up"—

"What! Cast up this for me, to prove your skill," said Margaret, pushing that rare thing in an Irish house of any grade, an account-book, towards the giddy Flora;—"here—the profits on the dairy during the past month. Norah O'Brian says our butter is the best in the market, and really the three cows have turned out so well—"

"Thanks to your management."

"And Norah," continued Margaret, "now manages the poultry so cleverly."

"Only it is so hard to make her keep them clean. What do you think she told me?—that none of the O'Briens were born with brooms in their hands to go sweeping afther the bastes of the creation."

"If you would let her alone about trifles she would do much better, Flora. My dear father always said that Irish reform ought to be read Irish alteration; you must effect the change

little by little, nor attempt too much at once, but go cautiously and gently about your improvements, not startling, but undermining their prejudices, and never quarrelling with them; for, if you observe, Flora, they are so ready-witted, that in a quarrel they have always the best of it, catch you up in no time, and overturn all your wisdom by a merry laugh. There, give me the book now, the casting up is done, I suppose;—give it me. What is this? Well, Flora, you are really too bad; you have written "Marcus Roche" three times across the pounds, shillings, and pence—that's a pretty way of casting accounts."

"The pen did it of itself, sister Margaret," said Flora, with a penitential look; "it was one Marcus made—it did it of itself."

"You are very silly, Flora, and I must say you do not try to improve."

"I know one who does not say so," observed Flora, and her mobile features assumed a very arch expression; "some one told me yesterday, as I was coming from chapel, that I was very much improved, and growing very like you."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Margaret.

"Why do you not ask who it was?" said Flora.

"Because—because—"

"Because, Madam Margaret, you know very well it was Connor O'Gorman. I wonder who blushes now."

"Flora, you are both thoughtless and unfeeling; and if Connor O'Gorman has desired you directly or indirectly to"—Margaret paused. Ever since her husband's death the conduct of Connor O'Gorman towards one he so deeply and dearly loved had been marked by the most especial reverence; he seemed to regard the young English widow as if she were his patron saint, and they had rarely met, except at chapel. Margaret felt this delicacy, and loved Connor ten times the better for it; it spoke to her heart far more eloquently than words could have done; and when contrasted with the coarse impatience of those who thought they could not speak too soon, Margaret felt that he had more delicacy of mind than she supposed, and came to the very just conclusion, that Irishmen often, and Irishwomen always, have sensitive and delicate perceptions.

"But I am sure," Margaret added, after her brief pause, "that Connor did not authorise you to deliver any message for him—he would not do so."

"Not a message, Margaret, but I told him we were very dull and lonely—and he carried

Hector in his arms—and said Hector must be dull too"

"Who said Hector was dull?"

"Why, how particular you are. I said Hector was dull, and so Connor said, would he like a little puppy to play with—if it was mine—and I said I would like it, and so Connor is going to bring the puppy here by'n-by; and now," added Flora sulkily, "the murder's *out*, and I'm *in* for a scolding."

Margaret looked annoyed, very much annoyed; Flora's unceasing activity of mind was a source of perpetual trouble to her. No Irish mountaineer was ever more wild or wilful than her generous, inconsiderate sister. "You know," she said, "how anxious I have been not to receive Connor here—at least not yet; besides, he may have altogether changed; he has rather avoided me, though I like him the better for it. Your accepting his gift is a sort of encouragement—in short, you have done very wrong."

"Shall I send him word that you will not let me have it?" inquired Flora.

"No, that would be giving his visit an importance it does not deserve."

"You never forbade Ulick O'Sullivan, nor Terence Dacey, nor the Cork attorney, whose

love was so very energetic, from coming—though to be sure *one* visit always settled their business; but that fine noble fellow, who has behaved so delicately (for I know he loves you a hundred times better than you deserve)—"

"He has not told you so, has he?"

"Law, sister, a person need not speak out the words; do you think I don't know when a man's in love, and who he's in love with? Well, here's Marcus Roche; I am sure I don't want the puppy, and he can tell Connor O'Gorman that I'm not to have it."

It was impossible to look at Marcus Roche without feeling interested; he was slight, rather under the middle size, of dark complexion, and that Spanish form and expression of face which is almost peculiar to the people of the county of Kerry. He had received the education supposed to qualify men for the Catholic priesthood, in France; but, unfortunately (for his mother had *promised* him to the Church) he, as they term it, "*lost his vocation*"—fell absolutely in love with Flora Russell, but, with more prudence than belongs to the generality of his countrymen, resolved to wait until one or two events, likely to occur, had taken place; he had some rich relations and really very good prospects. In the meantime he gave lessons in

French and tolerable Latin to several respectable families, and bestowed his leisure on the improvement of his future bride. He loved Ireland with all the unspoiled enthusiasm of an Irish heart, and, in the simplicity of his earnest and confiding nature, believed every tradition of the ancient grandeur and learning of his "darling country." He was a tolerable antiquarian, and so anxious to discover antiquities that he not unfrequently committed blunders, which were a source of perpetual amusement to Flora, who loved to banter and plague him in every possible manner. His education had given him habits of retirement which young Irishmen seldom possess. In that respect, and in the gentleness of his disposition, he differed essentially from his friend Connor, who was worthy of being considered an Irish Dandie Dinmont. Having said so much in favour of Connor O'Gorman, I must only add that in him Dandie's perfections and Dandie's faults were exaggerated; and that, moreover, he was as handsome a fellow as ever twirled a shillelagh, or danced at a fair. His deep blue eyes were full of expression, and could sparkle with either love or anger, as occasion required. He did not deserve the stigma of imprudence, for his ancestors, once possessed of much wealth,

left him but little to squander, and *that* little he had rather increased than diminished. His farm, if not neatly, was vigorously managed; and he was, in the expressive phrase of the country, "*born to good luck*," for whatever he undertook prospered—except, indeed, his love.

It was certainly a smiling fortune that sent Marcus to the Bee's Nest. Margaret respected young Roche, and, without affectation, told him of Flora's imprudence, at which Marcus shook his head, and Flora pouted over her work. He, however, seized the opportunity to tell Margaret how devoted his friend was to her, and how fondly he hoped, that at the expiration of her year of widowhood, he might be permitted to address her in the language of love. He spoke of his delicacy, of his bravery, of his fidelity, of his uprightness; told Margaret how perfectly just it was for her to return to the object of her first affection, and pleaded Connor's cause if not as warmly, more eloquently, than Connor could have done himself.

Flora was secretly delighted, though she had the good sense to hold her tongue, judging wisely, that her sister was still displeased with her. But then Margaret told Marcus, that supposing the year of widowhood expired, supposing that she really liked Connor, supposing

he really loved her, she had made up her mind that he (Connor O'Gorman) must serve a sort of apprenticeship to peace and quietness; that he must, in fact, before she consented to think of him as a husband, during a period of twelve months abstain from everything bordering on a FIGHT; that he must avoid altogether, or dwell in peace and quietness with Ulick O'Sullivan, when the said Ulick got from under the cloud that overshadowed him, and leave the O'Sullivan faction and the O'Gorman faction to settle their disputes, which one would imagine had been decided long ago; (for they had quarrelled at every fair, pattern, and wake, during the last two hundred years;) that he must deprive the O'Gormans of his counsel and presence; that during the same period he must not taste whiskey, which Margaret, like all sensible women, considered the curse of Ireland; and that, moreover, he must break himself of a foolish trick he always had—(and Margaret almost smiled as she spoke it)—a foolish trick of laughing and jesting with all the pretty girls in the parish; upon these terms only could a notion of the contract be entertained; but after making the declaration, Margaret drew herself up in all the dignity of second mourning, and told Marcus that even

then she would not bind herself to marry Connor.

"Then," said Flora, "Connor is not the man I take him to be, if he consents."

"Consents!" repeated Margaret, with the air of a queen; "*consents!* Flora, pray mind your work, you have put the hooks of Hector's pin-before on the wrong side."

"There's a wrong and a right to everything," said Flora, tartly, for she did not like to be reproved before Marcus; "but at all events, here comes Connor and the puppy; am I to take it?"

"I have nothing to do with it," replied Margaret; "but, Marcus, I can trust to your honour; I am not authorized—I"—and Margaret, in greater confusion than she had ever felt since the time when that same Connor breathed into her ear the first love vows she had ever heard, left the room, followed, however, by the trusty Marcus, who gave her a letter from her old lover, which he had at all risks promised to deliver.

The letter may possibly exist in the Chronicles of Blarney, and some other Crofton Croker, assisted by the extraordinary kindness of "the good people," may hereafter find and

bring to light its contents ; but if truth must be told, I confess I have never seen the original, and can therefore only form an opinion as to the nature of its contents from the subsequent conduct of Mistress Margaret Lee.

Collecting herself—which means summoning her courage—she entered the room where Connor waited to know his doom, at one door, just as Flora's pretty figure disappeared at the other.

She was quite right in the belief that Marcus, and Flora, and Connor, had all conspired against her; and that, delicate as Connor's conduct had been, he was, nevertheless, determined to renew his suit, and have a direct answer as to its probable termination.

Margaret had nothing to urge against his love, except the fear that habits, which, being an Englishwoman, she considered wild and reckless, would militate, not only against her own happiness, but prejudice the well-doing of her child; " Had I no one but myself to think of," she said, " the case, Connor, would be different; but I have my duty as a mother to perform: and though I might be justified in giving my hand with my heart, had I, as I say, no one but myself to think of, I owe it as a duty, an imperative duty to my child, to give him no father, as God has taken his, unless it be one

who will keep him free from the faults which mar the noblest natures in the world. It rests with yourself to say whether you will or will not comply with my—what shall I call it?"

"Say it's your wish, just say it's your wish," exclaimed Connor, "and then the only sorrow I'll have will be, that instead of one year you did not say a hundred, so that I might prove my love and constancy by waiting all that time. Oh, Margaret, the hope that was frozen in my heart has burst into life again, and is destroying me entirely. I—I—" and, overpowered by his feelings, the stout and true-hearted man rushed out of the room to conceal his emotion. He soon returned, however, and, truth to say, Margaret did not see him enter without a gush of proud and happy feeling, clouded, but not overcast, by a fear which it is difficult to overcome when you feel there is a want of stability in the person upon whom your heart reposes. He looked so handsome and so animated; his lithe boyish figure had ripened into such full and graceful proportions; his manner, so softened by disappointment, was now buoyant with joy, and the tones of his voice, despite the deep rich brogue (in which after all there is something *heart-warming*) were so full of fervour, so cheering—the sort of voice to hasten on the

morning—to call hope from the depths of despair—to wake the echoes of an enchanted cave—to talk love in—whether in sport, or the soft, low whispers of confidence and joy. His voice, I say, was the perfection of Irish voices, and no one with a heart can have listened to the richness of a well-toned Irish voice without feeling its power; at least, such as have ear for music and heart for affection; Margaret *had* both an ear and a heart, and, in good truth, if truth must be told, she felt quite as happy as her lover, and, during the remainder of the day, did not think a great deal of the obligation he had taken on himself to abstain from fights and whiskey. Margaret did not persist in her desire that he should refer to his love-making propensities in the resolution, "feeling," Flora said, "perfectly conscious of the influence of her own charms, as far as that went." Connor would not be satisfied with a simple promise; no war-horse ever manifested so much delight in the trappings of his slavery as did Connor O'Gorman. Margaret assured him that his word of honour would be sufficient, that she only wanted to be convinced he had the power of forbearance. But Connor knew it would be a much easier task for him to refrain altogether than to forbear, and so he determined to put

it, as he termed it, "out of his own power to do wrong." The next morning Father Horragan, the best-hearted and most jovial of priests, registered an oath on behalf of Connor O'Gorman, which he would have been sorry to take himself—against whiskey and fighting. In his zeal to prove to Margaret how gladly he would do anything to obtain his long-courted prize, he added various items, so as to show how joyfully he would rest her bondsman.

There was no loop-hole in his oath—no way of escape—no possibility of drinking with one foot inside and the other outside the door, so as to be neither in nor out; no saving clause by which he might soak bread in the spirits and so *eat* the liquor he did not *drink;* no mode of avoiding his "obligation" not to touch a drop *on earth,* and then climbing into a tree with his bottle. Such devices for cheating themselves are by no means uncommon with those who, in a fit of repentance, have sworn against the besetting sin—the darkest and deepest curse under which Ireland labours—the enemy they are always ready to put into their mouths to take away their senses; "the drop of drink" is to the Irish peasant a far more bitter draught than "the draught of slavery." Connor was too right-minded, too anxious to be what his long-loved

Margaret really wished, to condescend to stratagem. He had never been what in Ireland would be called "*over-fond* of his tumbler," but he had liked it well enough to know that he would miss the "warm drop of comfort" his pale and gentle sister Alice never failed to mix for him every evening. Still, what was that—what was anything to the chance, the almost certainty, of obtaining one known all through the province as the "Rose of Blarney"—the fair and rich young widow "who had refused such a power of men"—who was the best match in her sphere, ay, or above it, in the barony—the woman upon whom he had lavished the earliest and strongest affections of his young impetuous heart—whose determination to sacrifice herself for her mother's sake would have driven him to desperation, had he not resolved that he would at least make Margaret respect him. Marcus Roche had watched Margaret closely since her widowhood, and frequently told Connor he was convinced she loved him, and both Marcus and Flora laboured unceasingly to keep up a feeling, which, if they had known the depths of Margaret's heart, they might have been assured would have ceased only with her existence.

Connor's delight was so overwhelming that

he never fancied the second clause in his "obligation" would be more difficult than the first. The O'Sullivans and the O'Gormans were, as we have said, perpetually quarrelling, and a quarrel in Ireland invariably terminates in a fight. Nothing could exceed the dismay of the O'Gorman faction when they found that Connor was "book sworn" against any sort of a fight for a year and a day; they declared unanimously that "the back-bone of the country was broken," and hinted that none but a weak-minded "Sassenach" would think a man worth having who did not twirl a shillelagh and break a head.

Margaret, when her promise to Connor was known, received a just proportion of that sort of advice which is so often given and never followed; her prudent friends, who had other views for her, shook their heads, and said she was throwing herself and her lands away; her English relations wrote remonstrance on remonstrance, declaring their belief that he would never keep his oath, to which Margaret replied with a sigh, the bitterness of which was only known to herself—that if he did not, she was absolved from her promise. On the other hand, Connor's "people," who were as proud as possible of their descent, thought Margaret Lee,

the daughter of an humble English agriculturist, in "the very height of good luck" to get such a "fine, handsome, respectable young man as Connor O'Gorman, with the best blood of the O'Gormans in his blue veins;" and moreover, they thought her "proud and overbearing, to be setting herself against the customs of the country, and she only an Englishwoman, *without a back;* and no great things of a Catholic either, consorting with Protestants, and taking tea (if you please) with the minister's wife, and singing a Protestant hymn betimes of a Sunday evening; and she afther soothering Father Horragan, so that he doesn't heed it—not he."

Connor did not meet the reproofs and sneers of his former companions in arms and whiskey as philosophically as Margaret encountered those she received from her friends; and had he not sworn against single-stick, I very much doubt if, at the end of three months, his head would have been in a state of perfect preservation. He, however, shunned all public gatherings of the people, set his house and farm in order, and almost worried his sister Alice to death with plans and improvements.

"Brother dear, let the chickens eat the two or three grains of stirabout as they always used,

out of the saucepan, it's more natural to them —they're not acquainted with the trough, and are losing flesh. O my! 'twould be no wonder if my head was grey with the new fashions—no wonder in life, Connor; but I'll try and get into them if I can."

"That's a good girl, and a dear sister," was Connor's reply; "and Alice, the pigs got out of the sty yesterday—there are no pigs in the country, though I say it, that have so comfortable a home as ours, and yet they're the most unruly bastes in the town-land."

"Ah, Connor, it's hard to get over old customs, and Nelly never was contradicted till you put a door up in her face; it's hard to bear the craythur's grunts when she looks at the cause of her sorrow. She's a beautiful mother to the bonneveens, and never did hurt nor harm to mortal—barring now and again when she'd sweep up a young duck or a gosling—the chickens were always too nimble entirely for her—but I'll fasten the sty; and, brother, Mick says there need be no hurry in life about the hay, that there's no sign of rain."

"Now," said Connor, "it's true what Margaret Lee says; that unless you watch the people, the hay-harvest goes to destruction, just as as if we war waiting for bad weather

when God sends us good. She got in every blade of her hay-harvest last week."

"The Griffin was here this morning," said Alice, doubtful as to how her information would be received; "and she says——"

"What does she say?" demanded Connor, sharply.

"Why, she says, that the farmering boys find it hard staying with Mistress Margaret."

"What do they mean by hard staying? Where every one else pays a tenpenny, she pays a shilling; she gives them full and plenty of oaten and barley-bread, good stirabout, and never asks them to eat potatoes more than once a-day! O the ingratitude of the world, to call *that* hard staying. The upper servants at Squire Callaghan's hav'n't better food, nor, maybe, as good; indeed, I know it. What else did the Griffin say? Speak up, Ally."

"She said nothing in the world against her on that account, brother dear. Only, ye see, you can maybe put in a word that Mistress Margaret would heed, and not worry the boys so about being exact to time, and finishing the work what she calls neat. She sent poor Jimmy Casey off his job."

"Because," said Connor, "he never came to it sober."

"But he meant no harm," observed Alice; "*it was his luck, poor boy.*"

"Margaret Lee spakes a true word," continued Connor, while he tied a green silk handkerchief round his throat, in a style very becoming, if not very fashionable. "Margaret Lee says very truly that it's hard to know how to serve the lower orders of the people. I see it very plain now. Margaret has a way of making everything plain; they won't thank you to serve them in your way, and would rather have a couple of noggins of whiskey (Ally, I don't feel the want of the tumbler at all at all now) than a weight of potatoes or half a loaf of bread to take home to their children. It's true I'm saying. And everything she does, and everything she says, is for the good of the country, if they'd only think so. Sure, if she hadn't a heart in it, she need not have remained amongst us, nor—but I'm ashamed of you, Ally, to let the lies and the tittle-tattle of that ould, heartless bogthrotter, Mabel Griffin, that's neither a witch nor a wizard, but part of both, take hold of such as you. She's eating the heart out of that marauding scoundrel, Ulick O'Sullivan, who's afeard to show his face in the valley these two months: one day soothering down his faction, and then buttering them up, and abus-

ing us, and then the next she's down the Bograh Mountains oiling you; and if she darent speak out against the Rose of Blarney under this roof, (I only pray, if she did, that the wattles would knock her down of themselves,) she comes with a tail of one story, and the head of another, and then she fits the right tail to the wrong head, and the wrong head to the right tail, and so she goes on; and that's the birth of mischief all over the world. Only, Alice, I've not been a bad brother to you, and I take it very unkind to me, and very unjust to her, that was, as you well-know, and ever will be, the light of my eyes, the joy of my heart—my delight—my life—my HEART'S BLOOD, Ally,—I take it not right of you to let the first breath of a May morning touch your cheek, if it whispered a word against Margaret Lee. I'm out with you, Ally." And so saying, Connor threw that heavy accompaniment to a respectable Irish farmer, a "top-coat," over his arm, and was about to sally forth, when Alice clasped her arms round his neck, and kissing him affectionately, begged his forgiveness with many tears.

"You know," she said, "I love Margaret with all my heart. I'm proud ye'r likely to win the Rose of Blarney that you thought of so long, and I'm proud that now *you can put the*

first rose of summer in yer hat, and not a man dare lift his finger aginst it; but somehow, brother, ye seem altogether gone from everything but her, and that's always hard upon a sister, and the reason, maybe, why sisters-in-law, are seldom sisters in love."

"But you will be so, Ally—I know you will; it's the prate of that Griffin, that spreads as much disunion in the country as foxes with firebrands would in a field of wheat; and that being the case, mavourneen, why don't have anything, good, bad, or indifferent, to say to her—that's the best way."

"Well, indeed, Connor,' replied Alice, "I'm thinking ye'r right, only what am I to do? If a woman crosses our own hearthstone, what can we say but 'kindly welcome?' Sure there's not an O'Gorman on earth who'd say an unkind word in his own house, even to the Griffin. And then the woman (if woman she is) is convanient, with her knowledge of England and foreign countries; and a little morsel of finery, dog chape, and quite new, and willing to take anything in exchange; and if a body takes a fancy to a shawl, not tormenting for the money."

"Ay, Ally dear," said Connor, kindly, while he pushed the hair from his sister's pale forehead, "Margaret says that's what ruins the principles of half the girls in the country;

the egg-women and basket-women taking anything, even to a handful of whate, from the colleens, in exchange for a bit of riband or a crooked comb, or anything that way; and the girls taking the whate unknown from their parents,—it isn't the value of the thing, but the desate—(Connor did not observe that his sister looked confused)—and so, dear, when you see the Griffin coming, just shut the front door, and slip out at the back—there's one use I've found for the back-door you hated because it was an English fashion—and then you're not at home, you know, like the quality; and if you meet her outside the house, why there's no harm in life, then, in your looking distant, and so drop her easy."

"Drop who asy?" inquired a voice at the door.

Connor turned round, and there, fully equipped, stood the very "Griffin" of whom he had been speaking. Her appearance was striking, and yet she might have passed in a crowd without exciting observation,—but when once you had looked on, you could not easily forget her. She wore the long blue-hooded cloak peculiar to the south of Ireland; and those who knew her longest, never remember the hood drawn over her head, or her grizzled hair de-

fended from sun or storm by any better covering than a white muslin cap—*very* white—with a high crown or cawl, and a double border of what, even in those tasteful days of long ruffles, would be called magnificent lace; the cap was bound round the head with a broad riband, and by the colour of the riband it was easy to determine what party the Griffin wished to please. If she was on the forage amongst the country-people, she invariably mounted one of green, tied at the side in a *flahoulagh* bow; if she had something to tell, or show, the gentry, she pinned on one of a dainty blue or pink, and took good care to say that "indeed she was a paceable craythur, who never made or bothered with politics, or troubled about religion, madam!" No one doubted the truth of the latter assertion. Her eyes, or rather eye—for one of them she had lost—was small, bright, black, and restless; and certainly did double duty in "right good style." Her hair hung in spiral and abundant ringlets at each side of her face. Her upper-lip was shaded by a dark line, resembling a moustache. Her features, though large and heavy, were decidedly expressive of two feelings, however opposite: when bent upon cajoling, or insinuating, there

lurked an infinite fund of humour about the corners of her mouth; but when contradicted or annoyed, nothing could exceed the deadly expression of revenge that contracted her brows, and flashed from beneath their penthouse. Sometimes a large pedlar's pack was strapped under her cloak, across her brawny shoulders; but more frequently she *apparently* contented herself with a basket slung on her arm, and well-filled with Birmingham finery, and the fag-ends of antiquated ribands. She was gifted with extraordinary aptness and quickness of perception, and if she had had the power of commanding her temper, she would have been as complete a rustic Machiavel as ever plotted or executed plots. Nobody exactly knew what part of the country she came from, or seemed to remember when she came. She said she was a sailor's widow, and she was very fond, like too many in the polite world, of interlarding her conversation with scraps of what certainly were foreign tongues. Her fingers were always adorned with thick brass rings; her high shoes, clasped over her instep by square silver buckles, and her throat encircled by coral beads. She had an air half-savage, half-cunning, and though universally disliked, was received with more than usual courtesy by the always courteous

peasantry of Ireland, who applied to her the various epithets of "a knowing woman," "a grate card," "a fine woman with raythor more larning than a quiet God-fearing man would like in a wife;" while others hardly dare whisper lest she might hear it, "that she was no better than she should be, was up to all sorts of smuggling and deceiving, and the country would have a good riddance if she was out of it."

"Drop who asy?" she repeated, while her hands rested on the top of an iron-shod staff with which she occasionally assisted her speed. "Who do you want her to drop asy—is it me? for here I've been standing for more than a minute, the wind blowing away my gray hair, the way the world blows off ould friends. Mounseer—as the Frinch say—neither you nor Ma'mselle have offered 'Kindly welcome, Mrs. Griffin,' or *the* Griffin, as they calls me, the sons o' Cain, out of a left-handed compliment to my beautiful fingers;" and she stretched forward her expanded hands, showing that each digit was armed with a hooked nail, more resembling the claw of a kite, than the nail of a woman."

"I never refused the welcome at my own

door-stone to friend or foe," said Connor, not with a good grace, certainly ; " so if you come in ye'r welcome."

Alice advanced a chair, and then asked the pedlar if she would like to step into " the room," meaning the parlour, which, however excellent in the house of an Irish bachelor farmer, would have been little thought of in an English cottage ; still, the clay floor was free from holes, clean swept, and well sanded ; there was a picture of the Virgin over the chimney—a corner-cupboard, filled, or nearly so, with delf and china, the broken portions of which were not always turned to the wall—six chairs—a dark mahogany table, above which, on an antique bracket, was placed a duc an durras glass, a relic of Irish hospitality that had been in the family for I dare not say how many years. The table was covered with a piece of good stout frieze, being what the honest tailor gave up out of " the makings" of Connor's last " top-coat," and on it, in solitary grandeur, stood an old filagree tea-caddy, that some priest or friar had bequeathed to Honor O'Gorman, Connor's mother ; coloured prints of the saints, in black frames, hung upon the walls, and the window was adorned, if not shaded, by a white dimity curtain.

The Griffin accepted the offer, "swayed" herself into the room, and placing her basket on the floor, repeated her question; to which Connor replied, "Faith, ma'am, I was only giving a piece of advice to Ally, that when anything is neither useful nor ornamental, it's better to drop it."

"And am I neither useful nor ornamental, Mr. Connor O'Gorman, tell me that?" persisted the virago.

"Sure, Mrs. Griffin, I wasn't spaking to you at all," said Connor; "it's quite enough for a lone gentlewoman like yerself to have to stand against what's said to you, without gathering maneings, as a sparrow gathers straws, and for as little good, out of everything you meet on an Irish highway, or hear at an Irish door."

"If it was on the highway I met an affront," continued the unappeased Griffin, "I'd know how to punish it better than,—(if the wind of the word that crosses the mountains spakes truth, *joli garson*, as the Frinch say,)—I'd know how to punish it better than Mr. Connor O'Gorman, who must whiten his hands and perfume his breath with *O de Coloney* instead of whiskey, to plaze the Rose of Blarney. There's three black thorns up the chimney, I

see, Mister Connor — seasoning,* I suppose. Time was, whin it would be a *bon Chrettien's* office to tell Ulick O'Sullivan of the black thorns; but Ulick may fight the spirits that do be dancing, *bon grey*, *mol grey*, on the Bograh Mountains, or divart himself with the ghosts of the Macarthies, in the vaults of Blarney Castle, for anything you care; but it's fine to be obadient to the laws, and gentle and quiet, like sucking calves—only it's lately come to the O'Gormans, that's all."

"Don't heed her, brother," whispered Alice to Connor; "never heed her, *she's very dark this morning;* don't heed her, Connor dear."

"I'm not going to heed her, never fear, girl," replied Connor, with a bitter laugh; "I'm not going to heed her. But I'll tell you what, Mrs. Griffin, I'd scorn myself if I wanted strength to tell the truth, even to one who has more to do with evil words and evil winds than becomes an honest woman."—The Griffin started from her seat, and looked furiously at the young farmer, but he continued—"I *did* tell Ally to drop you easy."

"O brother!" exclaimed Alice, turning pale.

"And I repeat it. Alice O'Gorman, you're no sister of mine if you keep any communion

* The Irish peasants dry their fighting-sticks, by hanging them up the chimney, and grease them frequently.

with her. My door shall never be shut in your face, Mrs. Griffin, nor in the face of any wanderer, no matter how poor, no matter how ill-spoken of—I never will close my door against the houseless."

"Indeed, Mr. O'Gorman, we're not behoulden to your house, sir, we've plenty of homes, thank God!"

"You have, ma'am, I dare say—by sea and land, over land, and *in* land too—among the distilliries, maybe; and I'll tell you why I don't like the honour of your polite company for my sister, ma'am: she's a little simple, quiet girl, and I hold it, that every honest brother, father, or husband, through the country, ought to keep the women's hearts over which he has power, pure; and that it's the duty of a pathriot to watch over the religion and innocence of his countrywomen. For look here," continued the young farmer, and he snatched a white rose from his sister's bosom, and held it above his head, "this is woman as she should be—above the reach or touch of anything low, or mean, or dirty, or desateful; —but this is what she becomes," and he illustrated the figure by dropping the flower upon the clay-sanded floor, and crushing its petals beneath his foot; "this is what she becomes, when mixed up with the talk and the scandal,

the sin, and the badness, that's carried through the world by idle and mischievous bog-throtters, who shoulder sin like a musket, and whose lips are foul with black and bitter words."

"Are *my* lips foul?" inquired the Griffin furiously; "Mister Connor O'Gorman, Mistress Griffin says, Are *my* lips foul?"

"If they're not, I wish the country joy of the change, that's all. Now keep off, ma'am—I'll not suffer ye to strike me—I'll spancel yer hands with that strong gad I made for the kicking cow, and she never kicked since. I'll have no carrying of stories from the Bee's Nest here, or from here to the Bee's Nest. And so, ma'am, you may rest yourself as long as you please, and then we'll walk out of the house together, for Ally will be none the worse of spending the heel of the evening by herself."

"Let her pay me what she owes me," said the Griffin, "and then I'll go bail it will be many a long day before anything but *my curse* darkens your door."

"Oh! Mrs. Griffin! Mrs. Griffin!" expostulated Ally.

"Owes! What does she owe you?" inquired Connor, glancing angrily at his sister.

"Three thirteens, for a crooked comb; two testers, for black tags; seven tinpennies, for an

illigant shawl; and half-a-crown for she knows what herself."

Alice trembled like an aspen, and dared not look at her brother, who put his hand into his pocket, and drew forth a small leathern bag which was tied round the neck by a piece of string.

"Here, now; if it's not too much trouble, will ye say that riddle-ma-ree over again, Mrs. Griffin."

"If it's more convanient to you, Mounsieur," said the woman insolently, though she was marvellously appeased by the sight of the money—a thing in her particular way of dealing she seldom saw except when she carried her barter to Cork, "I'll take it out, as I have done before, in—"

"Hush, Mrs. Griffin, for the Virgin's sake!" exclaimed poor Ally, who, from the love of finery, had been led to exchange her brother's corn, and property of even more value, for the trumpery which this genuine huxter palmed upon the village girl as "genteel."

Connor's generosity prevented his taking any notice of the interruption, further than saying, (what by the way was a great boast,) "that such thrifles couldn't inconvanience an O'Gorman at any time. First of all, he counted down

the "three thirteens," then the "two testers," then the "seven tenpennies." "And now, Mrs. Griffin, ma'am," he said, "what was the last ingenious article for working the money out of a foolish girl?"

"She knows herself," said Mrs. Griffin, dropping the coins carefully into a large blue worsted stocking, which she had pulled from the depths of her capacious pocket.

"But *I must* know," persisted Connor.

"Then," said the Griffin, without noticing the imploring expression of Ally's face, who felt that she was rapidly falling in her brother's estimation—"then, Mister O'Gorman, it was a —*sirop*."

"Speak English, ma'am, if you please."

"I never am in the habits of confining myself to one language, Misther O'Gorman," replied the Griffin, throwing back her head; "but I'll do my best this time; it was a love-powder the young lady bought, to win—"

But Ally would not permit the mischievous creature, who had lured her on to so much folly, to finish her sentence. She threw herself on her knees before her, and implored her not to speak the name. "You said it would work harm," she exclaimed, "you said it would work harm, not good, if the name was spoke except at

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—oh! why did I heed ye—why did I heed ye!"

Connor raised his sister from her servile position and forced her into her bed-room; then, turning to the Griffin, he indignantly flung her the half-crown. Fond as the adventuress was of money, she was fonder of revenge; seizing the coin, she threw a leer of bitter hatred at O'Gorman, and then, fixing her malignant glance on the duc-an-durras glass, which she knew was the most precious relic Connor possessed of all his family's former wealth and station, she deliberately flung the half-crown at it; and the goblet, which would have formed the glory of an Irish antiquarian, fell into a dozen glittering fragments upon the floor. The woman looked at the destruction she had caused with malignant triumph, and exclaimed,

"May every one be so kilt, and spilt, and smashed, that turns their tongue on the Griffin; and may the seed, breed, and generation of Connor O'Gorman be in smithereens upon Ireland's ground, like that meminto of his glory—Amin."

And, fierce with passion, the violent and evil-hearted woman passed from the farm, leaving its master with an irritated, yet bruised spirit. He gathered up the fragments of the glass, and

placed them in the venerable caddy, and I am not very certain that his eyes were dry while he performed their obsequies; he remembered how often in his childish days his tall old grandfather had presented that glass, full to the brim of scalding punch, to the priest, or any other honoured guest, after he had mounted his nag at the door; he remembered the exultation with which he used to listen to the tales the old man recounted of those who, of high rank in ancient times, had drunk the stirrup-cup of gratulation and good-will at the castle gates of his ancestors, then the possessors of lands and rivers, where their descendant now could claim but a few poor acres. It had, indeed, been to Connor a magic glass—a sort of mirror, in which he saw the past, and on which when he looked he thought more brightly of the future. After he had locked the ancient caddy, fearing to trust his voice in converse with his sister, he placed his elbows upon the table, and covered his face with his hands. A low moaning roused him at last, and, upon looking up, he saw the fond, weak-minded girl, whose folly had smitten him to the heart.

"Indeed, brother," she whimpered, "I'm raly sorry, and ashamed, and often thought to tell you, only my mind failed."

"Your principle failed, you mean," said Connor, sorrowfully. "Oh! Ally, it is not the value of a few grains of corn that I think of, but the deceit. We were for many a long day but two together in a could world; I never refused you anything I could give; at wake or fair I took care no girl was better dressed than my little sister; I loved you, Ally,—I thought you loved me--but no, Ally, there is no love where there is not perfect trust, you, as well as the rest of my people, have been more like millstones to drag me under the strame than feathers to float me on it. Put on your cloak and bonnet, and come with me."

"Oh! not to Margaret! not to Margaret! she is so perfect herself, she would hate me."

"No, not to her," he replied, sadly; "for I could hardly look her in the face if I thought she knew my sister had been—"

"Not a thief—oh! no!" she interrupted; "it was the Griffin said you'd never miss, or think bad, of the thrifle of meal or barley."

"I do not want to hear what she said," exclaimed Connor; "we're done with her now; that's one comfort. But come to the priest, Ally, and tell him yer fault—it is long since you have been to your duty; make a clean breast, Ally, and then—why I am sure I'm hardly able to guide

you, you poor lamb, that had no mother, as I had, to watch over you—only was laid in her could grave, and you a dawshy thing, *like a young green rush in a lonely pool*, bent by every passing breeze, and nothing to strengthen you but the sun of heaven—and if that shone too strong, why it would scorch up the water of life round you, machree. I'm a great deal your elder, Ally, and I thought I taught you honour and honesty—there, don't cry, like a good girl —I'll never even mention it to you, and no one will be the wiser of it for me, and it will tache you a lesson; and when you've made a *clean breast*, and heard what his reverence says, why, dear, make Margaret your friend, as I wanted you, long ago; sure if she's above you in learning, so much the better for you—as the star said when she had the moon to look at. Please the Almighty to strengthen my good resolve, she'll be your sister, I hope, in four months and eleven days—the saints between us and harm! And keep up yer heart, my sister, and avoid all such as the Griffin—though, to be sure, like her distant cousin the Phœnix—there's not many of the family—"

"But the glass, brother, the glass," repeated Ally.

"Say nothing about that, Ally," said Con-

nor, in a sorrowful tone, " the least said soonest mended—which *it* can never be—so there's an end of that; but by all the books that were ever shut and opened—wait till my time's up—"

" O brother, brother !" exclaimed Ally, " she's a woman, and no O'Gorman ever struck a woman, even when he had too much—"

" I think," he replied, " she is an incarnate devil, that's what I think; and I think his reverence ought to see to it—she's not right, one way or other—"

" And yet," said Ally, " they say she can talk the birds off the bushes, as indeed I know, to my cost; and if you knew how, you would not look so could on me; and, brother, I remember onct she chated yourself about the knee-buckles, and in three months after, the riding-whip —but to be sure it was your *own* —not all as one as my fault."

The generous, superstitious, honest, confiding, and yet, on particular subjects, keen-sighted fellow, kissed his sister affectionately.

I would not have detailed this incident so fully, but that after events proved the truth of the adage—the injured may forgive, but the injurer never does. Connor, when requested to do so, forgave, (and he seldom did things by halves,) though he disliked the Griffin, who from her knowledge

of every person and every circumstance, possessed an extraordinary influence over man, woman, and child. Persons of acute observation and strong minds always have large power over their fellow-creatures; but, if they are badly disposed and can stoop to mould weakness and superstition to their own purpose, they become more dangerous to the well-doing of my countrymen, than the serpents St. Patrick got so much credit for banishing from the Emerald Isle.

PART III.

Connor O'Gorman had recorded his "obligation" against fighting and whiskey on Midsummer Eve; and, notwithstanding all the provocatives thrown in his way both by friends and foes, he had preserved it inviolate. Midsummer Eve had come again. During the past year he had been so much in the society of Margaret, that, like all men "desperately in love," he had taken the tone of his mind from hers, and every succeeding day revealed in his beloved some new perfection. Margaret was precisely the winning, gracious person calculated to make Connor a loving and useful wife. His fearlessness, generosity, and affection, as opposed to her timidity and retiring habits, made her love him all the more; and she really and rationally had

every reason, not only to hope, but believe, that the wild passions she had feared and warred against in her own sweet way, were now completely under his control. In the face of the whole country he had proved his devotion and allegiance to his liege lady; and she felt, and proudly too, that, in the face of the whole country, he deserved the reward he had coveted in youth and manhood.

No lady at fête or tournament ever felt a greater mingling of love, and joy, and pride, than did the gentle widow, Margaret Lee, when, on one of the most beautiful Midsummer mornings that ever smiled from an Irish sky, Connor O'Gorman knocked at the door of the Bee's Nest before the sun had gilded the time-honoured tower of Blarney Castle. Margaret had slept but little that night; her thoughts were occupied in turning over the sayings and doings of her lover, and she presented him to herself, through evil report and good report, scathless—the early chosen of her heart—the approved of her mature years. The first dawn of day found her praying by the bed-side of her child, and the knock that startled her from her knees, woke her sleeping boy, ruddy with health and beauty. She heard Flora open her lattice and speak to Connor from the window; and

then she heard the rapid canterings of his horse as he took the Cork road, having told Flora he should return to breakfast, and desired her not to disturb her sister, the saucy girl asked him, "if he did not wish her to be disturbed, why he had called at all." And, waving his handkerchief gaily, he exclaimed, "To tell her that Midsummer Eve is come."*

"But not gone yet, not gone yet, Master Connor," replied the laughing girl, as she shut to the lattice, unknowingly quoting the warning of the Roman soothsayer.

Margaret, having listened breathlessly to her lover's voice, while she clasped her beloved child to her bosom, kissed him with more than her usual affection, and again sank upon her knees, repeating her earnest prayer, that the Almighty would strengthen both her and Connor in all good, and instruct her how to fulfil the divided, yet perfect, duty she would have to perform as a wife and mother. She could not restrain her tears; they fell fast upon the rosy cheeks of one of the most beautiful children that ever charmed a mother's heart. No one would have imagined the little rogue had an English mother; his brogue was so droll, that Margaret smiled at

* In Ireland, it is usual to call the whole day preceding Midsummer Day, Midsummer Eve.

the earnestness with which he said, "Ah now, dear mammy, what ails ye? What makes ye cry, my own mammy? and Connor said last night this would be the proud day of his life; have done, mammy, will you, or I'll cry too:" and the little fellow put up his lip, while his eyes darkened with the earnest sympathies of childhood.

"There are two sorts of tears, Hector, tears of joy and sorrow."

"No, mammy, that can't be. I laugh for joy, cry for sorry; you never saw me cry for joy. Mammy would not tell a fib, but she might make a mistake. Shall I kneel and say the last little verse-prayer Connor taught Hector?" And up he sprang like a bird from its nest, and pressing the rosy palms of his hands together, while his fingers pointed upwards, and his beaming, joyous face was composed into an expression of gravity floating like a white summer cloud over a blooming garden, he repeated, according to his creed, the little evening chant, which I have heard make sweet music in many a Catholic cottage:—

"Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,
Bless the bed that I lie on;
One to watch, one to pray,
Two to bear my soul away."

And Margaret, when he had finished, commended his memory, and began the operations of his toilet, no easy task where a young gentleman expects a new suit of clothes.

"Mammy," continued the chatterbox, (little boys, by the way, talk as much as little girls,) "Mammy, Connor has promised me a hurley, not a hurley for fight, but a hurley for play, mammy, and I can spell Constantinople, whether you shake your head or no; and I can read out of the Read-a-made-easy, as well as in it, if the words are not too long, you know, mammy; and, O mammy, when you were out last night, the Griffin met me in the boreen, where I was picking cuckoo-sorrel with Norry, and gave me a ball."

"I told you never to take anything from her, Hector. She is not a good woman, and I am angry at your disobeying me."

"Connor said you would not be angry to-day, because it is his day," said the cunning rogue, and seeing his mother smile, continued, "and I went further on, and who should I see but Ulick Rhu, Mr. Ulick O'Sullivan, mammy; and whenever he comes across me, he pets me up so, though it's long since I saw him, and yet I don't love him, he kisses so hard, and has got such a many red horse-hairs on his chin. I

think, mammy," persisted Hector, lowering his voice, "I think he gave Norry something like money, but she bid me not tell you."

"I never," thought Margaret, "can suffer my boy to leave my sight, that he does not get some lesson in deceit."

"But he seemed very sad, for when he kissed me the second time, there was wet on his cheek, and he bade God bless you, which God does, you know, and then he hugged me hard, and put me down roughly, and said a bad word of Connor; and I told Norry I wouldn't have him kiss me again, and then she asked me, which I'd rather have for a dada, Ulick Rhu or Connor O'Gorman? And I know which I said," exclaimed the little fellow, jumping about to the manifest danger of the fastening of his nankeen frock. Margaret blushed, a habit she could not get rid of, and which her little Cupid perceived, for the next instant he sprang upon a chair by her side, and turning her face round, looked roguishly into it, while he inquired, "Mamma, what makes your face so red?"

Flora, at that instant, entered her sister's room with an open letter, and as anything new was to her particularly delightful, she informed Margaret that the epistle was from an old lover and

cousin of hers, a poetical young gentleman, who, in the days of his minority had perpetrated much miscellaneous trash, and who now having more money than wit, and being resolved that his light should not be hid under a bushel, had resolved to visit Ireland in the capacity of travelling tourist. He assured Flora that he had qualified himself for the task of a faithful historian by reading every book connected with Irish affairs that was worth reading, having first ascertained that it contained nothing inimical to his received opinions and politics, which, to Flora's infinite amusement, she perceived were of the most narrow and illiberal kind; he philosophically declared that he came prepared to meet the worst, and that above all, he hoped yet to prevail upon Margaret to relinquish all idea of marrying an "Irish clown." Flora was in perfect extasy at the idea of the handsome Connor being called *a clown*, by her little ignorant cockney cousin, Peter Swan, though Margaret looked dignified on the occasion; and Peter concluded by saying, that he hoped "the book" would make his fortune, as he intended to journey through the perilous island in search of the picturesque, and for the good of those persons who knew nothing of the real state of Irish

affairs. A postscript informed them, moreover, that he hoped to be at Blarney by Midsummer Eve, as he understood that such was still the gross darkness of the people, that the "rites and ceremonies of Baal were celebrated throughout the country by the misguided peasantry, on that night."

Flora was enchanted at the probable sport this arrival would occasion, while the more prudent Margaret feared the consequent annoyance that both Marcus and O'Gorman would feel at hearing their beloved country insulted, for she well knew, that nothing exceeded Peter's ignorance but his notion of his own abilities.

"I will make Marcus believe he is in love with me," said Flora, "that is, if he is anything decent to look at. And if you had any spirit, sister, you would play him off on Connor, but you have not, you go on jog-trot, jog-trot."

Margaret looked to see if Hector had heard Flora's observations, but he had left the room. "What may be sport to you, might be death to him," she said, "but this is no day to sermonize even you, Flora; the road has been like a fair all night. I never remember, I think, so many pilgrims on their way to Aghabulloge."

"Father Horragan threatened to send me there," said Flora, laughing, "and I told him

I would not go; and that if he sent me on a pilgrimage with peas in my shoes, I would first boil them: and then he said, I ought to do penance all the days of my life for tempting a sogarth* from his vocation. And I told him, Marcus was not a sogarth out and out, only in prospective; and that I'd give him up to the church with all the veins of my heart; and that he was in a better state than ever, for I had taught him humility and patience, and I don't know what, and that I'd undertake to teach his reverence the same if—"

"O Flora, Flora, you must be mad to speak in that way to Father Horragan. What did he say?"

"He said, I was a wild jade, and that a year in a nunnery would do me good. And I told him, it would make me mad, as it did poor Aileen O'Sullivan, Ulick's sister. And then a shadow came over Father Horragan's happy, good-tempered face, and he said, it was not the convent made Aileen strange, and that I must not call her mad,—she was only bewildered; and, moreover, he told me the less I said about the O'Sullivans the better, for that Ulick would hardly let a man rest at peace in the neighbourhood, who had carried off the Rose of Blarney;

* One intended for the priesthood.

and then his reverence wanted to know when the wedding was to be."

"That will do, Flora," interrupted Margaret.

"And what do you think, sister? Old blind, lame, deaf Monica's granddaughter has been here this morning already, to ask me to lend her two shillings to get married; she says they have enough to pay the priest 'barring' two shillings. And so that's all they have in the wide, wide world."

"The old story," sighed Margaret, "a wedding, and nothing to begin with; children, and nothing to give them; premature old age; a broken heart; and a narrow coffin."

"And yet," said Flora, "how warm, how true, how affectionate they are to each other! I have seen grown men and women starving, absolutely starving, carry their decrepid parents on their shoulders, and share with them the scanty morsels which their poverty wrested from the poverty of others. Peasants' wives, however beautiful, and in early youth how beautiful they are! are never known to break the marriage vow, which ties them to poverty, and often to harsh, unfeeling husbands; for that horrid whiskey at times renders them more than half mad—"

"And then," continued Margaret, "persons some of them almost as self-conceited and as ignorant as our cockney cousin, come over here, and go back exclaiming against the wretchedness, misery, starvation, and madness of a people whose feelings and habits they cannot understand; and yet have neither intellect nor feeling to devise means for the improvement of a glorious and suffering nation."

"Bravo, Margaret! I wish Connor had heard that speech, it was positively patriotic. And Marcus would have paid you the highest compliment of all in his estimation, he would have said, you ought to have been an Irishwoman."

"The Irish are very provoking, though," said Margaret, "and very obstinate, and will argue that they are doing exactly as you wish, when, in fact, they are doing the very opposite. Hush!—there, Flora—so much for clean clothes! look in the farm-yard, there is Hector absolutely trying to ride the pig; and yonder comes Ally, poor, simple, gentle Ally; and, Flora—now don't laugh—what colour shall I run in this cap, blue or pink?—do you think I could bear green?—Connor is so fond of green." But Flora did laugh, and Margaret did wear green; and, as to the meet-

ing of the lovers, those who in their ignorance imagine there can be nothing neat, or nice, or tasteful in poor Ireland, should have seen Margaret Lee's parlour on that memorable morning: to be sure, she was an Englishwoman, but it proved what management will do, with patience and good temper—(if you lose your temper in Ireland you immediately lose your power.) The curtains were purely white; the carpet (I like to be particular in all domestic details) was of a pale drab ground, strewn with roses and shamrocks, and thistles—and some there were who objected to this union, but Margaret always quietly observed that she thought it pretty; and there was a looking-glass over the chimney, and little green shepherds and shepherdesses, and still less poodle-dogs, in little curly china, with tufted tails and black noses, and, as little Hector used to say, "black eyeses"—and black baskets in their mouths; and this sort of things they in their simplicity called "chimney ornaments;" and the chairs were mahogany, and there was a sofa, and a small circular table made of Irish oak, and on that stood what Flora called an old pipkin, but which Marcus Roche, who had presented it with great solemnity, termed "a cinerary urn;" and then there were two little work-tables; and the

window opened down to the ground, and was shaded by a pretty verandah, over which Margaret had trained hundreds of roses; and as you stood beneath the verandah you saw all the flowers in what Margaret quaintly termed her "flower knot," which was bounded by a laurel hedge; and, forming a beautiful back-ground, rose the Castle with its bridge, and water, and trees, and wild birds, by night as well as day, cawing, screaming, or at midnight hooting amid its ruins; and the singing-birds were so tamed by Margaret's gentleness that they made the little centre green of her garden like a bed of tulips with the variety and brilliancy of their plumage, for she replenished their table —"mammy's singing birds' table," to quote Hector again—every morning; and there wrens, and finches, and tomtits, and yellowhammers, and blackbirds, with their golden bills, and thrushes no longer timid, and wriggling wagtails, assembled, and fed, and afterwards

"Paid their quit-rent
With a song."

Nor must I forget the bees, those useful monitors of husbandry and wisdom. I never yet knew an industrious person who did not love bees. English reader, do you like Margaret's Irish garden? Ah, trust one, who

though she loves the land, has never yet written of it a *line of false praise*, but has freely and honestly censured what she hoped to amend,—believe her when she tells you not to credit all the evil that is reported of a country, which during a long lapse of years has sent forth so many of the bold, the brave, the brilliant, the beautiful, the glorious, to rank foremost among the admired and the celebrated of the world!

There stood Margaret then, in her garden, with that natural duplicity which seems born of love, engaged in tying up some geraniums, but listening all the time for the well-known sound of Connor's steed; while Flora compelled her lover to perform various offices at the table, where she had prepared breakfast, that she might have the pleasure of finding fault with everything he did.

While Flora was employed so perfectly to her satisfaction, Margaret's reverie might have found the following words, for so ran her true heart's thoughts; they are worth recording, for they mingle the tenderness of the mother with the affection which she had long borne to the man who was about to become her husband.—"Although I love dear Connor now as warmly as when he was the first to seek my young unfettered hand, yet, did I think he would not

prove a kind and upright father to my child, I'd leave him, ay, at the altar's foot. How different is the love I bear them both ; and yet, how perfect each ! Connor will dearly love my boy, protect and guard him ; I am sure he will, for I would love the dog that followed Connor. They cannot call me rash in this new marriage. I have known him so long, watched him so closely, tried him so hardly. Yet still, I have observed those Irishmen are wild and uncertain as their mountain storms, sudden and fickle ! Harry's not *that*, no ! nor the rest. For one whole year he has abstained from faults that marred his noble nature,—good earnest *that* of future steadiness. But when I really am his wife, I'll watch and seek to sway him for his good ; in gentle firmness, unperceived, I'll do it ; for when a woman seeks to guide her husband, it should not be like one who breaks a horse to his own purpose, using bit and spur, now checking, and now goading his career—but like the mariner who steers the ship, directs it by a single touch, while none can see the power that rules its motion !"

Margaret's reverie was interrupted by Flora's exclaiming, " Sister, I wonder what delays your truant swain ; if his year was out-and-out, which it won't be till to-morrow morning—at least, ac-

cording to my reckoning, why I'd say he was taking his "morning," as old Monica used to call it. I miss Monica very much: since she went to live on that horrid Larry Sullivan's land we never see her. Hark, Margaret, that is Connor; how he makes Bran gallop! here he is. Now, Peg, don't blush; Marcus never makes me blush, not he! Margaret, what will you bet that the first word Connor says, will be cushla-machree? I'm sure of it. Here he is," she continued, while gazing from the window; "how handsome he looks! so gay, and cheerful, and joyous! and what music in the tones of his fine manly voice!"

"Flora, Flora," expostulated Marcus, while Margaret, after a little hesitation, left the room with an air of great composure, to meet Connor, which she was anxious to do as far away as possible from Flora's saucy comments. Flora, though, was right, for the first sentence Connor uttered, was "cush-la-machree!"

"Now, Margaret," exclaimed her lover, "now, the next best thing to seeing you, is hearing you spake; now, only just let me hear you say 'Connor,' 'Connor dear,' or,—but I can hardly expect *that*—'Connor darling.' O what a sweet word darling is! There now," he added joyfully, for Margaret had, I believe, murmured

the word he so much loved—"There now, that's what I call real music; let Jerry Nale beat that on the pipes, if he can. Do you think it worth your while to remember when your father was alive, a little *colleen* you were, with your beautiful curls floating on the breeze? I loved you then—"

"Ah," said Margaret, "but remember, Connor, remember, my father died, and left us poor."

"I know he did," replied Connor, mournfully; "I was but a slip of a boy then, without money, or much chance of even getting on as well as I am doing. I have not a great deal of worldly goods now, and I never told you I had; but, Margaret, plase God, before we're married, every acre of yours shall be put out of my power to injure. No, *avourneen*, I know your heart, but there's the boy, Margaret, the boy—it shall never be said that Connor O'Gorman injured the dead man's child. You married away from me to save your mother from the misery the English dread; *the poverty*, for they're not born to it, and bred to it, and used to it, as we are. You married," continued Harry, waxing wroth, "you married an *ould nagur*—"

"Hush!" exclaimed Margaret Lee. "He was a gentle, good, and kind old man; tender of me, as if I were a bird—indulgent to my whims—"

"Whims," repeated Connor, "why you never had a whim in your life; one would think it was of Flora you were talking."

"O yes, I have my whims," said Margaret, smiling; "you know I am obstinate."

"O that's no whim in a woman," replied Connor.

"Well," said Margaret, "at all events you must never, never breathe a disrespectful or unkind word of goodman Lee; he was unselfish, generous; he left me rich,—"

"He kept me poor for years," said Connor, with his usual impatience. "Well, Margaret, beloved of my heart and soul, there I'm as dumb as a boiled lobster; but thus much, my time is as good as up; you wouldn't have me till I proved my steadiness. I made my bit of an oath last Midsummer Eve against my faults, and the heavens above, they know how true I've kept it."

"To your confession," said Margaret, laughing. "Never tasted whiskey?"

Connor crossed his hands and opened his fingers. "Never, by these five crosses."

"Never got into a *scrimeege?*" said Margaret, conscious that she could not pronounce the word.

"*Scrimeege,*" repeated her lover, mimicking

her accent, "the blessing of God on you, mavourneen! how purty you turn your tongue to it, *scrimeege!* boult it out, darlint, *scrimmage,* Why then if I had, I've plenty of friends, let alone blood relations, that would soon run to you with the wind of the word."

"This was not exactly in our bond," continued Margaret, laughing; "but have you not made love, even once? Now mind, I said once."

"Once," repeated Connor, holding his handsome head on one side, and looking very cunning; "once! O Margaret, avourneen, you'd look over it *onct*—a year's a long time—have you no heart in your own sweet bosom?—och, it's cruel hard you are on me intirely—you would look over it *once.*

"Indeed," said Margaret, "I would not."

"See that now," replied Connor, pretending to look contrite; "see that now; well, big and little, old and young, the women bate the Turks for cruelty; I made love once, and only *once,* since this time twelvemonths—only once; put that *pout* off yer beautiful mouth, it's for all the world *like a cobweb over a rose-bud*—sure, it was YOURSELF, I made love to, Margaret—*yourself,* darling, your own sweet self."

These, and such like observations and confessings, passed in the "Rose of Blarney's" garden

while Marcus and Flora waited impatiently enough for their appearance at the breakfast-table, where a right substantial dish of thick stir-about, a quart jug of milk, plenty of cream, butter moulded by Flora's rosy fingers, tea, eggs, and oaten cakes, promised an abundant feast.

Flora had made up her mind that their converse had continued quite long enough, when her thoughts, feelings, and amusements, were thrown into a new channel, by the arrival of her Cockney cousin, who entered bearing a portfolio, bag, valise, camp-chair, and telescope, followed by sundry ragged Hibernians, who declared that he had engaged them all to carry his luggage, yet persisted in being his own porter.

"I *h*assure you," said Peter Swan, in the truest of Cockney pronunciations, "I *h*assure you, if you really are my cousin Flora, grown from a little girl into a young woman, that nothing could exceed the *h*importunity of those persons; I suppose they come under the denomination of *h*aborigines of the soil, *h*original *h*Irish—they have quite confounded me."

Flora was enchanted with the appearance of the traveller; although it was the sunny month of June, a large blue shawl was folded across his chin and tied in front; the ends had escaped

from the confinement of a drab great-coat, which was not so closely buttoned but that the edge of a scarlet waistcoat appeared above it, and his little narrow-brimmed (in those days jockey-looking) hat was advanced knowingly over the left eye, so as to form a sort of shade for the wandering orb, whose movements appeared quite independent of the other eye. Peter squinted, and that was the distinguishing characteristic of a thin, white countenance, such as very young ladies just escaped from school are in the habit of calling "*interesting;*" his forehead was high and dreamy, his hair straight and flaxen, so that he seemed all of one hue: his figure was neat and petite, and his legs covered by a pair of arched boots that were called *hessian.* Contrasted with the wild merry fellows who lounged at the kitchen-door, and who, if disappointed of the job they expected, were resolved not to be cheated out of their laugh—contrasted with such wild-looking serfs, Peter seemed a being of another world,—so meek, so pale, so overloaded with this world's superfluities, and withal so lachrymose, while the peasants, despite their rags, wore smiles upon their lips and merry mischief in their eyes.

"You, Larry Kenny," exclaimed Flora, "if you have been playing any tricks upon this

cousin of mine, I'll send your mother no more tobacco."

"Me! In troth, Miss Florry, you beauty, I'd shame to do anything of the sort," replied the fellow, grinning; "but the little gintleman wasn't civil, though I tould him I'd go from this to Bantry to sarve him, on account of the house he was coming to; he bid me go to the down-below place that couldn't be mentioned before you, Miss Florry; and sure I only made answer that I'd go to heaven if he pleased, and be more out of his way there."

"I thought I should have been robbed and murdered," said little Peter, untying his shawl.

"Your honour won't be thinking so, and doing injustice to the country, may be, this time twelve-month; before then, what between the feaver and the 'ructions, and the murders, and the burnings, it's little life, I'm thinking, will be in any of us," and Larry winked very knowingly at his companions, as well as to say, "I'll frighten the little gentleman any way;" and the merry Irishman succeeded, for the shawl dropped from the traveller's hands. "What!" he exclaimed, looking fearfully at the group, and then at Flora, "what! and is it really so bad as that? and those windows look so very

insecure, and the locks—why, bless my soul! there are no locks!"

"Not one," laughed Flora; "but, never mind, I'll protect you—and those fine fellows (and she pointed to the Irish lazzaroni) they'll protect you—and this very wise and learned young man, Mr. Marcus Roche, so skilled in philosophy, and antiquity, and all the arts, except the useful ones, he'll protect you—and," she added, turning to the group, "Connor O'Gorman, won't he protect him, boys?"

"The finest shillala in the barony—if he'd only use it," exclaimed several voices; "any way, he has a free heart, a light foot, and is, body and soul, the finest boy in the whole counthry."

"And here," said Flora, "is a shilling to drink his health, *in porter*; now mind you, Larry, *it must be in porter*—nothing stronger." The gift was followed by a shout of joy at the shilling and a cheer for Connor, and many a sly jest, accompanied by a wish that Miss Florry might have a good husband and soon; and the ragged regiment scampered off with as much gratitude, and more mirth, than a gift of twenty times the amount would have excited in an English quartette of the same class.

"And now, cousin Peter Swan," said Flora, "permit me to tell you you have arrived in capital time, not only to see the superstitious rites, as you call them, of the *Irish*, but to witness very soon a far more interesting and more ancient ceremony."

"O la!" exclaimed Peter, "I shall be so delighted!"

"What do you think, Peter, most likely to happen to a young and pretty woman, who has been two years a widow?"

"She breaks her heart," said Peter, hanging his head on one side.

"She does no such thing," exclaimed Flora, gaily; "she takes another husband."

"How odd!" said the little Cockney; "but I hope he is not an Irishman, for I shall consider it, as I wrote, a point of duty to oppose that; and indeed, Miss Flora, I think one husband enough for any woman."

"So it is, *at a time*," replied Flora, "quite enough; but, you see, Margaret's heart returned to its first love."

"To me? I was her first love!" sighed Peter.

"*You!*" laughed Flora, "you, indeed! she'll be married to one worth ten of you; a brave, warm-hearted Irishman—she will be in a very,

very little time, Mistress Margaret O'Gorman."

"Oh!" said Peter, "what a terrible name; I will put it in my note-book—for *the* book that I told you of,—it's in a state of great forwardness."

"You or the book?" inquired the saucy Flora.

"You are very pert, cousin; but I assure you this portfolio is nearly filled with my tower in search of the picturesque, in the kingdom of Ireland."

"What, already!" said Flora; "why you only landed at Cove last night."

"How very ignorant you are on literary matters," replied Peter, who felt that it was now *his* turn to look contemptuously on his cousin. "Towerists, Miss Flora, always lay in a stock beforehand; I myself have made the sketches from published prints, altering *ad libitum*, as we say in the musical world,—placing a tree instead of a cottage, or a cottage instead of a tree,—a man instead of—"

"A donkey," interrupted the tormenting girl, "or a donkey instead of a man—no great difference, Peter, eh?"

"I beg your pardon," said Peter, quite unconscious of the allusion, "there *would* be a

great difference—exactly the difference we want. No one could say, for instance, that in a landscape I would be the same thing as a donkey."

"Perhaps not, in a landscape," replied Flora, by a great effort commanding her countenance, while Marcus, unable to preserve his good manners, quitted the room.

"And, then, no one can say the engraving is copied from a print," persisted Peter. "I make the alteration in my drawing, which is the thing engraved from, and all that; and the extracts from former tours, you know, can be done as well in London as here; and then a few new anecdotes, or real observations, work in beautifully. Messrs. Shuffle and Cut, the great City men, get all their tours done in that way."

"Then why need you come over at all?" naturally inquired Flora.

"Why, really," said Peter, simply, "I don't know, only people won't swallow, Mr. Cut says, all the things that used to go down about Ireland long ago; and they like fresh writing—always something fresh. I have undertaken it at great personal risk, but really one must do something for the good of one's country."

"And one's own," put in Flora; "but here at last come Margaret and her lover. Don't offend him, Peter, his wings are but newly cut,

and he's a desperate fire-eater—don't offend him."

After the necessary introductions, and a great deal of banter, the merry party sat down to breakfast. However Connor's conversation with Margaret had ended, he was evidently half-wild with joy, shaking everybody by the hand over and over again, and declaring that on Ireland's ground, be he who he might, there wasn't to be found so happy a fellow as Connor O'Gorman. His sister Alice had joined them, and she looked quiet, and blushing, and awkward, in new finery. And Peter, between his cups of tea and pieces of cake and eggs, and other "creature comforts," became at last warmed into a corresponding feeling of gaiety. I never knew any Englishman long able to withstand the heartiness of an Irish welcome. Peter did not seem to comprehend why they were so happy, nor to understand what they said, but still he progressed, and even ventured to ask Connor if he would change seats with him, and let him sit next Margaret, which of course was refused; then he wanted to sit next Flora, but Marcus declared boldly, he had a right to that distinction, which Flora assented to, as Marcus had earned it by mending her whip, worming her dog, and breaking-in her poney: then

Marcus began a grave explanation of the nature and origin of the round-towers, which every one seems to have written about without understanding: and Flora interrupted him, by asking her cousin if he had ever leaped a five-barred gate, a feat which Peter said he had never performed but once, when a bull threw him over one in the Petersham meadows,—at which Flora was greatly delighted, and assured him that Irish bulls were famous for long horns, and could almost toss a man by looking at him; and little Hector, who sat proudly on Connor's knee, told her she ought not to tell fibs; and then Peter pointed out to Margaret that she ought to give her boy the advantages of an *H*english education; and Marcus, with the delightful warmth of an Irish patriot, went back to the time of Old Ireland's glory—a time to which the poet makes reference, in one of the most delightful of his poems,

For high was thy hope when those glories were darting
Around thee, through all the gross clouds of the world,
When Truth, from her fetters indignantly starting,
At once, like a sun-burst, her banner unfurl'd,

and concluded by offering to write Peter an account of the ancient cathedrals, seats of learning, and principal fortresses, with the names of

the founders and chieftains, at which the traveller was much delighted—it having occurred to him, for the first time, that the ruins of Ireland were not altogether "modern antiques," but the real ruins of a once learned and warlike people. This disquisition was altogether too serious for Connor's joyous feelings; he had made up his mind that he must either quiz the cockney for his amusement, or quarrel with him for his, as he considered it, most impudent design to write a book about what he did not understand: and so he abruptly asked Peter if he would not like to know the names of all the potatoes that ever were planted. Peter, laying down his knife and fork, gravely assured him, that he intended investigating the *ha*gricultural state of the country, though the chapter thereupon was nearly finished.

"Finished! that's nate," said Connor; "that's the way the counthry's ruined entirely, but any way, here they are"—and with the rapidity of an Irish tongue, which obliged Peter to deposit his knife and fork on the plate, he began, "Farmer's glory, red-nosed kidneys, white eyes, lady's fingers, Cork reds, Connaught jumpers, Wicklow bangers, and Carrigaline beauties; to say nothing of the apples of Kilbourishane, the whites of Derry-gortnacloghy, the

cups of Knocknadrowsky, or the reds of Ballynaboulathrasanagh."

"Stop, stop!" exclaimed Peter; "Irish potatoes are terrible jaw-breakers."

"No such thing," said Connor, "no such thing; thim are the potatoes that would crack their own cheeks with laughing at ye. O then, how can you live at all in London, where the potatoes are made of wax, the new eggs out of ould Irish ones, and the milk's pumped from the body of the earth, so that ye can't tell it from water—bathershin!"

"What's the meaning of bathershin?" inquired Peter.

"It's all one with nabauchlish," said Connor.

"And what's nabauchlish?" again asked the cockney.

"It's just the same as—as—as," laughed Connor, "as thurumpogue."

"I did not know I was speaking to one learned in the dead languages," observed Peter, with increasing respect.

"Faith, you may call Irish a dead language, to my sorrow, and more's the pity," said Connor with feeling. And then he whispered Margaret, "I must get a rise out of him somehow. Mister Peter, sir, you'll be for seeing the curosities—Blarney Castle, built by Oliver Crom-

well, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and Paddy Blake's echo,—you know what an echo is? Well, this one stops mostly at Killarney —d'ye understand me?—but before the season sets in at the lakes, she always comes up here, on her own jaunting-car, about Midsummer." Peter, however, laughed at this, and Connor continued, "It's as true as that the candle ate the cat; ask Mistress Margaret if she hasn't often heerd her of a moonlight morning. And ye must go and see Castle Hyde,

> "Where the trout and the salmon
> Play at backgammon."

"O yes," replied the bewildered Peter, "I will."

"They are going to have a merry-making a little way off," persisted Connor, "but the grand merry-making is at Gougane-barra; I'll give ye a real Irish poem, that was made about it. That's too far for you to go to-day, but I'll take you to see Blarney Castle, and get the polishing kiss off the *big Irish smoothing-iron*,—the Blarney stone—that 'ill make an Englishman civil and sweet even before he's had his dinner. And—but you *have* seen the Cove of Cork, where Saint Patrick finished the last of the sarpints; you know the

song, maybe; I'll tune it up for you after dinner; but there's no melody in my voice now. It's a gay song; how the blessed saint, betwixt praying and preaching, got rid of every venomous thing in the country—how

> "The frogs went hop,
> The toads went flop,
> Slap-bang into the water—
> And the snakes committed suicide,
> To save themselves from slaughter."

"My dear sir," said Peter, having soberly taken out a set of dandyfied tablets; "my dear sir, that's a blunder."

"Law, cousin Peter," exclaimed Flora, "how clever you are! Surely—I see it now—do you perceive it, Marcus? though the snakes committed suicide, poor dear things! it did *not* save them from slaughter."

"They are not dear, but dangerous things, Miss Flora—very," said Peter; "I saw one once in the oak copse on Richmond-hill—and I——"

"Ran away," added Flora.

"I did," said Peter; "it was 'no go' to meet a snake with its mouth open."

"Tell Peter the story of the last of the serpents," said Margaret; "it will amuse him while Flora (for our farm-maids are gone to a

station) removes breakfast. Now, Connor, the last of the serpents."

"*Serpints!*" repeated Connor, gaily; "*sarpints*, darlint Margaret! Sure yer dear voice is low and sweet—tingling new music to my heart and ear, like the summer rain-shower among your garden roses."

"O la!" thought Peter, "there is so much love-making going on, that, not to be quite out of fashion, I must do some civility to the prim girl, with the red elbows."

"Tell the story," repeated Margaret, "tell the story, Connor, and don't be foolish, or I'll retract my promise."

"Well, I will," answered the lover; "and, Mr. Peter, it's true enough for your book."

"Ye know—but no, ye don't know yet—when the holy saint had drov them all out of Ireland, one big blaguard was too cunning intirely for him—devil a stir he'd stir for all the saints in the calendar. Well, if the sarpint was 'cute so was St. Patrick, and what does he do but buy a big trunk, and lave it at one end of a forest; well, my dear, off goes the saint to the other end of it, takes out his breviary, and walks along reading. The sarpint, in coorse, was in the wood, and soon saw his reverence strolling on, and thinking of nothing at all at all

but his book; so, 'Good morrow, Saint Patrick,' says he; well, with that the saint looks about him with a start, and 'Good morrow kindly, sir,' says he. 'It's a walk your taking, I believe,' says the sarpint. 'True for ye,' says St. Patrick. 'Well,' says the sarpint, 'as I hav'nt any comarades this present time, I'll go a step with you, St. Patrick,' says he. 'With all the pleasure in life,' says St. Patrick. Well, my dear, on they went together, and a dale of fine talk they had by the same token, till they came to the end of the forest; wid that St. Patrick gives a start, and 'Och, millia murther,' says he, 'what's that?' pretending to be grately frightened. 'Arrah, sure it's nothing but a trunk,' says the sarpint. 'Well, it's a mighty big one,' says St. Patrick. 'Big, dy'e call it?' says the sarpint, 'many's the bigger one I've seen in Cappadocia and the Gracian Isles,' says he, 'full o' gould candlesticks and silver forks,' says he."

"Silver forks!" said Peter, "I thought we got them from the French; that proves their antiquity."

"That's your business, not mine," replied Connor. 'Well,' says St. Patrick, 'it's big enough to hould you, any way.' 'Tisn't,' says the sarpint.

'Tis;' says the saint. 'I'll bet ye a pot o' porter 'tisn't,' says the sarpint. 'Done,' says St. Patrick,—'and done and done's enough between two gentlemen. So the sarpint gets into the trunk, but the ould rogue laves the ind of his tail outside. 'And now,' says he, 'didn't I tell ye 'twasn't big enough,' says he, 'don't you see I can't get my tail in.' Well wid that, 'Let me see,' says the saint; and so, my dear, down he flings the cover, and he whips out his key; and 'I have ye now any way, ye blackguard,' says the saint, says he. 'Och, let me out, St. Patrick,' says the sarpint, 'let me out and I'll pay ye yer pot o' porter, like a man,' says he; but St. Patrick wasn't to be cushogued; and so he put the trunk upon his shoulders and away he walks with it to the Cove of Cork, and flings it into the sea; and when the sea's roaring and the big wave's rising, ye may be sartin sure that the sarpint's lashing his tail in the trunk, and bawling to St. Patrick to let him out and take his porter. And now, Mr. Peter Swan, that's the way St. Patrick got rid o' the last o' the sarpints."

"Now, Connor," said Margaret, when the story was finished, "away to the castle, and then Peter Swan will be back time enough to go to the pattern with Flora and Marcus."

"And leave you *tête-à-tête* with Connor," whispered Flora to Margaret, slyly.

"Now, Mr. *Ogreman*, I am ready," said Peter.

I wish I could portray the look of proud indignation which Connor called up at what he considered the profane pronunciation of his name, as looking unutterable things at the cockney, he replied, slowly and emphatically, "My name's O'Gorman, sir!"

"I beg your pardon, sir, but really the name is so hard to pronounce," said Peter; and fumbling in his pocket, he produced his tablets, and commenced writing 'o G R E.'"

"No, no," interrupted Margaret; "that would be making an ogre of him, cousin—O'G O R."

"Sir," again interrupted Connor, who was looking over his shoulder, "it is not with a fairy o, like that, you are to begin my name, but with an O that will look as big as a swan's egg in a wren's nest! Shew me, I'll write it for you, though I never *did* write upon such things as these before."

"I see, I see—thankye," said Peter, "Mr. O'Gorman," and he pronounced the name deliberately; "but I say, now, my good fellow——"

"He's a terrible fire-eater," whispered Flora

to her cousin, who nodded his head, as much as to say, "Thank ye for the remembrance," and continued—

"My good fellow—now—I assure you—I mean you no disrespect—none in the world—but the very best of us are liable to mistakes. So I only hope—I will do what I can to avoid mistakes—but I do hope, if I should, instead of your right name, call you *Ogreman,* that you will not be angry."

"Nor must you be angry either," said Connor, "if I too make a mistake, and instead of Swan, call you *goose*."

And after some more laughter, they both departed to view the beautiful ruins of Blarney Castle. Connor thought he had forgotten something—his handkerchief, or his stick—anything or nothing—simply that he might return to say a few sweet words to Margaret, who, seeing Flora, and Marcus, and his sister in the garden, he knew was quite alone. He found her in tears, but drew from her the confession, that they were tears of joy. He assured her he would return in little more than an hour, and then they would talk over the plans and prospects of the future.

"I am like a giant, Margaret—strong, not only in resolve, but in action."

"Dear Connor, do not trust too much to

your strength," gently counselled Margaret; "it is ever dangerous. I have heard wise people say, that when we fancy ourselves most strong, we may be most weak. Even my last promise was conditional!"

"Why tell me that? Now, do you think, after the past year's trial, I could fail? Lord bless you, if I was floating in a sea of whiskey, which you say is the father and mother of mischief, and my eyes and ears were mouths, do you think one of them would turn traitor, and take a drop? not they. I'm strong, Margaret, strong as the seven champions of Christendom," exclaimed he, as he quitted his betrothed.

Alas! poor Connor!

THE GROVES OF BLARNEY.

PART IV.

Time out of mind the vaults under Blarney Castle have been the resort of wanderers—whether beggars, smugglers, or raparees, it matters not; it is more than probable that persons who, like the bats and owls, sought refuge among the ruins, combined all characters, as inclination or necessity prompted. I have seldom known an Irish ruin without tenants in but too perfect keeping with the place. Sometimes a shed built with the crumbling materials of an old monastery crouches between two buttresses, or finds support against the walls of a refectory, where once the wassail and the song sounded when the prayer was finished. Its inmates are either a young starving family—the father, perhaps,

hay-making or harvesting in England, while the mother and children beg throughout the neighbourhood, and retire at night to the desolate shelter, where, shivering with cold, they listen to the winds sighing above the graves, or the sharp whistling of the storm through the tottering ruins; or, perchance, some half idiot will rush screaming from his hiding-hole, or creep, mummering and jibbering, like an ape, to your feet, and crouch and crawl, to excite your charity.

The visitors—for they were only such—to the vaults of Blarney, whom I am about to describe, were neither hungry children nor drivelling idiots. It is still believed that subterraneous passages extend far beneath the waters, and that many used to assemble there who dared not walk abroad in daylight, and who found the damp concealment of the vaults exceedingly serviceable in their time of need. Smugglers stowed away many things in perfect safety within their recesses; and the gentlemen who wanted foreign spirits without paying duty, were generally able to procure what they required through the instrumentality of the Griffin, or some equally skilful agent. Many scores of gallons of mountain-dew were concealed under the loose stones and dried herbs

which appeared, to the eyes of those whom curiosity tempted only to a partial glance through the vaults of Blarney, as nothing but heaps of withered grass; and, moreover, the persons most interested in concealment, always managed to have some half-witted knave in their secret, who had sufficient cunning to draw off the attention of those whom a spirit of inquiry might lead to a more minute investigation of the subterraneous ruins than would have been consistent with the safety of the speculators in illegal practices.

While all was mirth and jollity in the cottage of the fair young widow, a group of very different character were cowering (though the month was June) over the embers of an expiring fire, in a compartment of the vaults from whence a long narrow passage, now probably stopped up, communicated with the Giant Stairs in the Rock Close.

The chamber was low and extensive; a massive arch divided it in the centre, and at the extreme end, an opening, into which any full-grown person must stoop to enter, led to apartments more obscure; the heavy atmosphere clung round the walls like shrouds, and veiled the distance, while a strong and powerful column of light, entering from a long

fissure in the wall, shot athwart the gloom of the farthest division, and rendered the darkness more intense.

An iron pot was suspended from a triangle formed by three wattles above the fire, and a tall man was seated with his back to the pillar of light I have endeavoured to describe, while his face, upon which the fire glared, looked fierce and sullen; he was engaged in fitting a flint to the lock of a long rifle, and took a great deal of pains to pick, from a heap by his side, one that would fit it exactly. As he bent to the fire you saw that the outline of his face was bold and expressive, the features more high than is observable in the generality of Irish countenances, and his complexion and hair justified his *soubriquet* of the Rhu, or red. He was known throughout the country as Ulick Rhu O'Sullivan, or Red Ulick, and he has already been noticed as an old admirer of Margaret Lee's. Ulick was one of those whom a little more of any of his many different qualities would have made either a good or a bad man. As it was, he continued what circumstances made him. Like his rival, Connor, he was the descendant of an ancient family, and his great-great-grandfather could stand on the top of one of his own mountains and see no land that did not

call him master; but—the old story over again —the family had been ruined by politics and extravagance, and what was spared by the one was destroyed by the other.

Ulick Rhu, at the age of thirty-five, was a malcontent — a smuggler — but still a chief amongst "his people," for the poor Irish—God bless them for it, it is a right noble virtue—are never driven from their allegiance to their ancient friends by poverty. Had Ulick been of sufficient consequence, he would have been outlawed; as it was, during the past seven or eight months, it would not have been wise for him to have shown his face in the broad daylight in Cork, or Mallow, or Kinsale, or anywhere, in fact, where the laws were enforced, which it is difficult to do amongst the fastnesses of the Bograh mountains, or indeed in any mountainous district. Ulick O'Sullivan and Connor O'Gorman had been foes, as they say in Ireland, "before they were born;" their factions had disagreed and fought it out, year after year, at every hurling-match, at every fair, wake, pattern, and merry-making throughout the country. For some time, however, a cessation of hostilities on the part of their respective leaders had caused a temporary peace amongst the subordinates. O'Gorman's resolve not to fight, and the

impossibility of Ulick's being seen during daylight in the lowland and public places resorted to by Connor's friends, contributed to keep the peace, and more than one magistrate prided himself upon a tranquillity which proceeded from any cause rather than the exercise of legal authority.

Ulick O'Sullivan, when he had fitted the flint, proceeded to inspect the contents of a basket, that was filled with cordage, snares, large rounds of cork, and many nondescript things, which, however, had their uses; and all the time he maintained a surly silence, although our old acquaintance, the Griffin, sat opposite to him, smoking her pipe, and winking her eye at every puff that rose upwards. There was another, and far more interesting object leaning against a pile of wood, which, most probably, had been dragged there to provide firing for those who resorted to the place; a small, slight girl, whose long, bright, auburn hair, resembling the coolan* of Ulick, told that she was an O'Sullivan of the same family; and the expression of her energetic features, which were seldom at rest, told another tale—that her mind was wild and wavering; her hair was parted on her low, white forehead, and descended over her shoulders and below her waist in heavy tresses; a blue shawl was crossed over her bosom and tied

* Long hair.

behind, and her small feet and ankles were covered with light blue stockings, protected by the *sabot* looking shoes, which did not prevent her running with the grace and swiftness of a wild roe. Her employment, for she was never idle, was spinning coarse tow from a distaff; the movement of her arms, bare almost to the shoulder, her attitude, and the lightness of her figure, had much that was picturesque, if not classic, in its appearance. The three singular beings associated together in the vaults of Blarney Castle, had remained a long time silent—the Griffin meditating, as usual, on gain and mischief—Ulick's countenance betraying that many contending feelings agitated his mind—while Aileen's silent smiles and muttered words at last broke into song. Her voice was low and sweet, and ever and anon it would rise into a strain of fervour, which always speaks to the heart:—

SONG.

He tells me he loves me, and can I believe
The heart he has won, he would wish to deceive?
For ever and always his sweet words to me,
Are Aileen ma vourneen, a cuishla machree.

Last night, when we parted, his gentle good-bye,
A thousand times said, and each time with a sigh,
And still the same sweet words he whispered to me,
Were Aileen ma vourneen, a cuishla machree.

The friend of my childhood, the hope of my youth,
Whose heart is all pure and whose words are all truth,
Oh! still the same sweet words he whispers to me,
Are Aileen ma vourneen, a cuishla machree.

Oh! when will the day come, the blest happy day,
When a maiden may hear all a lover can say,
And he speaks out the words he now whispers to me,
My Aileen ma vourneen, a cuishla machree?

"It's a wonder to me, Misther Ulick," said the Griffin, when Aileen's song was finished, "it's a wonder to me how that craythur picks up the songs and keeps them in her head, that can keep nothing else in it, from the fine English songs, all *lullebolaro*, with their grand flurishes and *solfaggios*, as we say on the Continint, to the very scraps that have been trotting over the mountains and bogs of Ireland ever since I was the height of a knitting-needle, that craythur has them at every end."

"She has, poor thing!" replied Ulick, raising his eyes from the basket, and turning his head towards his sister, while an expression of positive tenderness stole over his harsh features; "she has a wonderful janious entirely for music, and, at times, mother, believe me, understands more than people think. She follows me about like a dog, and I often think I'm hard upon her; she can't bear to see me load a musket

ever since her sister, (a hard and hot bed to those who did it, and that to all eternity !) was killed in the scrimmage five years agone, and she had sense enough to carry the body as good as a mile, that it mightn't be known poor Una followed the boy she loved into the thick of the ruction. Aileen, come to Ulick ;" he added, and the poor girl obeyed him with the sly and sideling air of a timid child who is not quite certain whether it is to be petted or punished. She advanced to Ulick's side, dropped on her knees, and placed her small head under the large bony hand he had extended to her, murmuring " Poor Aileen, poor Aileen !" in a tone that would have melted a heart of stone. Ulick passed his fingers through the long tresses of her hair, and then resting his hand on her forehead looked in her face.

" Poor Aileen, poor Aileen !" she repeated, adding, " don't strike poor Aileen, don't strike poor Aileen."

" I never strike ye but when ye bother me, and then I'm sorry afther," replied Ulick.

" What else can ye do," said the Griffin, " when she does bother ye, following ye about like a shadow? she must be a great trouble to ye entirely, up in the mountains and down in the valleys."

There were some warm natural feelings still alive in Ulick's breast, for he answered, "I tell ye what, ould devil's dam, I've seen something about ye more than once I don't like; you've no nature in ye—to be sure you've nothing to be natural to, there's something in that; I have nothing but this poor girl, who, through wind and rain, and trouble, and shame, and bodily danger, and poverty, follows me, with her innocent, gentle, loving ways, and her bits o' songs, and lights the little reason the Lord has given her, for my good, as she thinks it; and yet, my poor sisther, I've forgot I was a man, and struck her more than once—but if I did I struck *my own heart too*, and bittherly it ached for it afther.

"Oh! oh!" laughed the Griffin; and the laugh, so unjoyous, so unearthly, seemed to congeal on the old walls. Aileen crept closer to her brother, and looked imploringly in his face.

"I wonder," said the Griffin, "you don't ship for the Amirikees: what is there in one's *pathree*, as the Frinch shouts about, to keep ye here? All the time Connor O'Gorman has been parley-vouing the widow, you've been on the batther, and, by rason of the reports spread about ye, not altogether liking to be foremost before Mr Sunlight, and now, why every one says *they'll be married before the week's out*."

O'Sullivan started from his seat and swore a deep and bitter oath that they never should. "If you had not quarrelled with him through your foolish temper," he continued, "*you* might have got round him, and managed to make him break the coward's oath he took—she'd never have had him then."

"I niver see the man I could not get round, whether ould or young," replied the Griffin, taking the pipe out of her mouth, and winking her eye more vigorously than ever, though she did not perceive the glare of intense anxiety with which Aileen listened to her words. "I nivir see the man I could not get round, *if it was worth my while;* but there's not many men now going that is—the spirit's took out of them, and they're afeerd of this, and afeerd of that. Ulick O'Sullivan, wasn't it to you (or, what's as good, to your people, only one or two bits of hundred years ago,) that every trout and salmon, buck and doe, field and rock, bog and hill, house and castle, to be seen from the top of Bograh mountain, belonged? Didn't ye tell me, and I here ever so long waiting for the *rendyvous* you promised me, didn't you yourself tell me you were afraid to set the mountain-still at work again, and so many of the finest boys in the counthry dying alive with the druth for want of

a sup of the rale thing, which nothing, nor no one on Ireland's ground can turn off but yerself —and yet, ye'r afeared to break the law agin, after what's been said, and what's out afther ye; sure you know, as well as I can tell ye, that it's not by the law you'll live; and you know that if you were to turn out quiet and dacent, with yer bow and yer tythe to the parson, and yer rint, for the acres yer grandfather owned, and take off yer hat to every English spalpeen that comes over to live by beggarly trade—I say, if you war to turn out that way, instead of being hunted and playing at hide-and-seek,"—her eloquence was interrupted by Aileen's voice, singing a line of the old Blarney song,

"Like cats and badgers underground."

"True for ye, dear; and, Ulick, if ye forget, as ye seem to be doing, that you war once a BRINE-OGE, with the spirit of tin men in ye, who'd give ye credit for it? They'd say the law tamed ye—the law tamed ye;" and again her scornful laugh rang through the vaults. "Why do ye stay in the counthry if yer afeard to turn a penny?"

"That's thrue," replied Ulick, "but my heart clings to the ould places; and though the O'Sullivan counthry has been parted among strangers, and I, the last, all as one as an out-

cast in my native land, yet, somehow, I can't leave it; and though, to be sure, the scent lies altogether another way now, I shouldn't like to be sent away in disgrace for that Still."

"Then stay here," retorted the Griffin, replenishing her pipe; "stay here—the place of all others you ought to shun—and hear the people crying, 'O'Gorman aboo!' Maybe (you've a nate foot on the flure) you'd take a step at their wedding."

"Curses bitther and black on yer aggravating tongue," exclaimed Ulick, thoroughly roused, for with all his fire, he had the natural indolence of an Irishman; "I can bear anything but that. My name's as good—better than his! I have not, like him, been tamed into a cottage chicken—I have lived bould, and what the Sassenach calls bad—a mountain life: I have speared the salmon, snared the wild animals, and turned the grain—"

"I wish to the Lord, you'd take to it again," interrupted the tramper; "where's the good of your stivering about the place that-a-way, like a mountebank—a '*home de joo*,' as the Frinch says—frightening the life out of Aileen, and bothering me, with yer play-acting ways; look now, and think of it; I know yer heart and soul was wrapped up in that whey-faced, toss-

me-head widdy, that always looks as if it's condescending she is, when she ates a patatee; and I know this minute it would do yer heart good to tare Connor O'Gorman from stem to starn, as we say at sea, and ye'd rather hear the stones rattle on *her* coffin-lid, and see the long red earth-worms and slimy slugs on her lips than his kisses."

"I believe," muttered Ulick, "you are right."

"Well," she added, "if you can manage with yer own boys to set the Still going, and are rasonable, and let me have what I want, on the terms we talked about, why, I'll put it so, that Connor O'Gorman and Margaret Lee are never married. Twenty or fifteen years ago, it would have been nothing but whip her up, and whip her off—but it's different now."

"I was thinking of a way myself," said Ulick, in the same fearful undertone, and almost unconsciously laying his hand on his musket.

"Never do that," observed the Griffin; "if you can help it, *never* do that—ye'r too fond entirely of it in this country."

"This counthry!" repeated Ulick; "why, what counthry do you belong to?"

"O this to be sure," replied the woman; "sure, and why wouldn't I belong to it?"

"I'm not sure of it, for whenever you can, you have a way of your own, of hitting it a slap."

"Its faults, ye mane," replied the woman, with an increased brogue. "Its faults; yet I'm a thrue pathriot; I stick to the sod; I'm not like thim that spinds all they have in making *bon voyage;* and I'm as fit for one counthry as the other."

"All the same," replied Ulick, with a half-laugh; "as fit for the rope as the rifle."

"Bad cess to you, ye gallows bird," exclaimed the virago.

"There, there," said Ulick, "I never saw anything like you—you won't take an innocent joke. But I'll tell ye what—this Connor—we both hate him."

"Heart and soul!" replied the Griffin; "I'd go farther, *for nothing,* to hurt or harm Connor, than I'd do to hurt or harm any living thing, and that's saying a great deal; indeed, Ulick, I've no tenderness for the English widdy either, but setting a case, that you'll do what I spoke to you about, see if I don't set a cross between them they'll not readily get over."

" I'd peril my life to prevent their marriage," said Ulick. " What she can see in him I can't tell—some charm was over her; nor can *I* see how you can get round him, and his hate and his faction, both so strong, and the glass you shivered, and all."

" It's by the manes of the glass I'll do it—see that now! And I'll lose no more time, but go out and *reconnightshere*, as the Frinch says, and come back to you; and keep close; and," she added, in a whisper, " keep *her close*, for she's been listening, with her mouth open, to every word we have said, which I don't quite like." And then she whispered something in Ulick's ear which made him start, and lifting her basket on her arm, left the brother and sister alone.

The Griffin was right in her supposition that Aileen had heard, and in some degree understood, every word that had been spoken; but when Ulick looked round on her, she seemed perfectly unconscious, twisting her spindle to the low burring noise she made with her lips, which occasionally wandered into the air of some popular song, or a few wild notes of her own. With her natural quickness, she saw that her brother was observing her movements, and twirling her spindle more rapidly than

usual, she sung a passage from one of Carolan's sweet melodies.

"One fine Sunday morning devoted to be
Attentive to a sermon that was ordered for me,
I met a fresh rose, on the road by decree,
And though mass was my notion, my devotion was she."

Ulick had not long leisure to observe her movements, for his attention was arrested by hearing the Griffin call out loudly to some one intent on reaching the Blarney stone. He listened, and heard her exclaim, "Take care of yerself, Misther Connor, for though I've not heard the pleasant sound of yer voice this many a day, still I'd be grieved ye broke yer neck that-a-way."

"And then, from the extremity of the building, Ulick heard the voice of his rival, in better-tempered reply than he had anticipated, "You're as bad a sight as a single magpie, ye ne'er-do-well that you are; and only I swore nothing should come amiss to me this blessed day, it's not answering you civilly I'd be,—but it's no matther."

"Forget and forgive," shouted the Griffin; while Ulick, looking along the wide fissure through which the light streamed at the other

end of the vault, saw that Connor was assisting a stranger, whom we recognise as Peter Swan, along the broken parapet. Instigated by the worst passions of his revengeful nature, he seized his musket, and leant upon it, uncertain how to act; and then he heard the woman add, "I was going to wish all at the Bee's-Nest joy, and to show you, my grief, I've got a duc-an-durras glass, which I meant to give Masther Marcus for you, Misther Connor; it has wonderful ould letters on it, and is a rale curiosity; there's them would give goold for it; but I'm failing fast, with no one to look to me, and meant to have been at Lough Derg this blessed midsummer on account of the penance and the relief I expect from the holy well, but couldn't, because of the wakeness. Still, I've began to *make my soul*, like a good Catholic, as I hope I am; and you, Misther Connor, will be friends, I'm sure, and not put yer weight of ill-will on the back of my other sins, God help me!"

During the latter part of this speech, which was delivered in an hypocritical whine, Ulick had raised his gun, and let it down, more than once. Again he laid it to his shoulder, but his lip quivered—the strong desire to destroy was on him, and yet other feelings held him back

from such terrific sin. Aileen had watched his movements from behind the arch with intense anxiety, sometimes springing forward, and then drawing back, as if she feared to thwart his humour. After glaring upwards for another instant, he placed his finger on the trigger, and not till then did his sister rush forward, and with a shrill convulsive cry, throw herself on his arm, so as utterly to prevent his harming Connor, if such was really his intention. With all the violence of his ill-governed temper, he flung the poor girl from him.

"Fool!" he exclaimed, "I did but try its weight." He was ashamed of his own baseness, and sought to apologise for it, even to a creature who was hardly capable of comprehending the meaning of his words. Aileen's shriek, however, recalled the tramper to the vaults.

"Are ye all mad?" she exclaimed; "Connor has heard the noise, has left the whey-faced Sassenach he was cochering with, to make the best way he can through the castle, and will be down in a jiffy to search the vaults. Leave her here, and make yer way to the wather."

"No," replied Ulick; "why should I shun him? I'll stay here."

"Then manage yer own business yer own way," she answered. There are half-a-dozen

Peelers near the bridge, and the Englishman that's with Connor will be humoured by seeing a wild Irish hunt, afther a wild Irishman. Stay, by all means."

Ulick took his musket, and entered one of the secret passages, just as Connor's good-humoured face peeped like the sun through a cloud into the gloom of the cavern.

"O Misther Connor," exclaimed the Griffin,—falsehood coming more readily to her lips than truth,—" it's proud I'm to see you. I only left this misfortunate crathur here to watch the morsel of pickled pork I was biling, with a head of cabbage, to keep my midsummer, on account of the wakeness that's over me, and she got frightened, ye see. What did ye get frightened at, ye darlint?" she continued to the trembling Aileen. " Maybe she saw—Lord save us!—the spirit that walks the waters to watch the jewels in the lake, or—but what was it, Aileen?"

" It's poor Aileen O'Sullivan," said the gentle-hearted Connor. " Poor Aileen, who has no sense to answer—none! Why, then, Aileen, gra! You're like the monthly roses that climb the Bee's-Nest; they're beautiful to look at, but they have no scent; the perfume of sense

and feeling is wanting in ye—and yet maybe not feeling—for there's feeling in that blue eye, wild and blue. Do you know me, Aileen?"

Aileen advanced a step or two towards him, and clasping her hands, sung a few lines of a beautiful old Irish song, which admirably described our hero—

"My Connor! his cheeks are as ruddy as morn,
The whiteness of pearls do but mimic his teeth,
While nature's own beauty his brow doth adorn,
His hair Cupid's bowstrings, and roses his breath."

"Ah Aileen, you havn't forgot me, I see—you'd make me conceated, avourneen, if I'd mind ye; for ever and always that was your song to me; but I say, Mother Griffin, what enchantment are ye afther down here? like the

Comely eels in the verdant mud,

this is a quare place to choose, out of the day light that's enough to renew the heart of man."

"Misther Connor, have ye forgot and forgave?" inquired the Griffin. "That's what my heart's set on."

"Why, yes," said the unsuspecting Connor, "to be sure I have; didn't ye say you were sorry, and what more could you do, if you had cut my throat, than ask my pardon afther, which

you should have; I'd scorn to keep enmity against a woman," and he extended his hand, which the old traitress took and muttered some words, whose import did not reach his ear, for Aileen continued her song,

"Smiling, beguiling."

"Never heed any more of the music, now, Aileen," said Connor, "though ye're the sweetest bird that ever came off the red branch to which you belong;" but still she repeated,

"Smiling, beguiling"—

"Don't ye hear? That's enough of yer gosthering," said the beldame, angrily; and the poor girl instinctively crept to Connor's side, as before she had done to her brother's.

"I've got the glass here," persisted Mrs. Griffin, letting her voice fall again into a low whine; "I've got it here, dear, though it's but a small reparation; but the temper, dear, and the could and the losses I meets with, the *mauvais soojets* I finds; and sure if ye think I made your purty sisther pay too dear for the crooked comb, I'll give her one for nothing, that I will. My sins, dear, hang heavy about me—"

"Confession, confession!
Then go to the priest to confession,"

sung Aileen. "And you, Connor, think of the boy that walked ten mile, yet broke his poor shins over a pebble, a pebble," and she looked earnestly in his face.

The tramper cast a long glance from the corner of her eye at the girl, but before she turned her head to do so, the expression of Aileen's face had changed, and she kept repeating,—"A pebble, a pebble."

"She has no wit, the poor thing,—but here's the glass, Masther Connor, here's the glass," she continued, pulling out what had been intended for a very different purpose; and Connor saw one of those rare glasses, which are the delight of an Irish antiquarian; several Irish letters were graven on it, and Connor was pleased to observe the crest of the Macarthie More on one side. "But it's not the one our people prized," said he, returning it to the woman, "so I don't want it."

The Griffin knew full well that the only way to work upon Connor was to excite his sympathies,—to make him pity her, for he had no mean vices to work upon.

"But, O Misther Connor, sure you'll ease my mind,—you'll ease my mind; I'm in misery because of the ill I did ye, unknowledgeable, to be sure, but still it *was* ill, and I know it; it will be purty for the darlint that won't be a

widdy long; and Marcus Roche will jump sky high for it, why not?—And O, if you'd only see the corjial in it, I don't mane whiskey; if you believe me, Misther Connor, I have not put a drop of the nasty stuff inside my lips for many a day; I confine myself intirely to this corjial;" and she drew a flask from her capacious pocket, "intirely to this; it's so warming, and cheering, and *joyoose*, as the Frinch says, a fine thing, intirely.

"What is it?" asked Connor.

"The foundation of it is wather; and cloves, and *nooyoo*, and a thrifle of brandy; but in coorse you don't dare to touch it, for fear of gainsaying the purty one you know of. Well, don't. O sorra a taste of it I'll give ye, not a drop; sure I know you darn't touch it. It's the mixture the grate Frinch generals drank, and they have such an objection to strong wathers, that you might know it was as mild as new milk."

Connor, like all men, wished to show that he was not *afraid* of a woman. One may be certain that a man's chains press him tightly when he asserts that he never was enchained in his life.

"The pebble, the pebble," sung Aileen, but

she was not heeded. Connor's spirits were at the highest; he was full of mirth, of glee, of confidence, of affection for the whole world; he would, that Midsummer morning, have embraced all the foes he had on earth, and sportively saying, that though he never meant to have anything to say to the whiskey, he had taken no oath against brandy-and-water, he put the flask to his mouth and quaffed right heartily.

"It's strong enough though," he said, "strong enough though, ould woman; and now, shake hands, and I'll get Mistress Margaret to forgive ye; and if ye war to die, ye thraitor, I'd see there was no want of tea and tobacco at your funeral, though I intend to set the back of my hand against whiskey now, and for evermore, amen! But I say it was strong."

"It's the wonder of the world, how the taste of it can be changed, and the colour too," said the tramper, who had changed one flask for another of the compounds she carried about her for chance customers; I'll put some bleaching carraways in this, and instead of a pink, it'll shine out a bright amber; I've puzzled many of the gentry with my skill, my *connysense*, as the Frinch calls it, that way, for Irish gentle-

man aren't knowlegable about any spirit but the one; just put that to ye'r lips and taste the differ; it's a dale waker than the last."

"Not a dew-drop in it, none of the mountain, eh?" inquired Connor.

"O, 'pon my sowl! sure it's not chating ould soldiers with gingerbread I'd be trying not I; it's yerself would soon find me out."

"It *is* weaker, for a certainty," replied Connor, after drinking, "and very curious—"

"Weaker," muttered the hag, as she topsy-turvied her basket, "it's three times as strong, only they always fancy the last the weakest."

"I'll tell ye what I'll do," said Connor, "if this glass really belonged to the Macarthie, I'm sure Marcus Roche would like to have it; and whatever the value of it is, I will pay ye, and *that* is a great complement entirely, after the way you trated me; but that's past, and all bad blood pass with it. I've said it, and so now, good-bye to ye, and a more pleasant lodging the next you fancy."

"Ah, it's yerself was ever and always generous, as I said to those that talked to-day about the way you suffered thim blaguard O'Sullivans —" but the instant that Aileen heard the epithet applied to the name of her beloved brother she sprang wildly forward, and twirling her

distaff round her head while the flax streamed from it like a pennon, she danced and shouted, "Huroo for O'Sullivan! huroo for O'Sullivan!" Her imagination was thrown into a new channel; she darted under one of the low arches, and, like a spirit, disappeared in the darkness.

"Poor thing, she's wilder than ever!" said the generous Connor.

"Ay, poor gra girl; but I was sore-hearted when I heard the counthry say, how you suffered thim blaguard O'Sullivans to put upon poor Monica Murphy, who, though now she's laying forenint her own door in the gripe of the ditch, has seen good days, and was married in her youth to Jonas Murphy, who was own brother to a boy who married ye'r grandmother's first cousin, before you war born."

"Monica Murphy, ould Monica Murphy, that has often carried me in her arms, lying in the gripe of a ditch!" repeated Connor, indignantly. "And who dared to put her there, I'd like to know," he continued.

"Just then the bit of a middle-man," replied the Griffin, determined to strike while the iron was hot, "the bit of a middle man, Tommy O'Sullivan, commonly called Tommy-raw, for the rint the craythur owes for a roof to *brake her heart under;* and her boy, that would have

stood by her while there was breath in his body, away beyant seas, through the grip the law took on him, for the mistake he made, carding the tithe-proctor, when he meant it to be the gauger, —small odds, and more power to his elbow any way; but it's a hard case on the ould woman, that's what I say,—it's a hard case, Misther Connor, and every one that heard it cried shame, and said the spirit was pumped out of Connor O'Gorman, or he wouldn't suffer it; but I said, what was he to do against his oath?"

"Oath, what oath?" repeated the easily-excited Connor. "What do you mean by oath? I never took an oath against protecting the poor and needy. I never took an oath against righting the widow on whom the Lord's hand pressed heavily,—if you name such an oath as that to me again, I'll make you fit food for the fishes below in the lake—though it's my belief the craythurs would turn from the dirty drop that's in ye. What do you mean, Mother Mabel Griffin, by *backbiting* me to my *face?*"

"O Misther Connor," replied the crone with assumed meekness, "I never bit your back; I am a changed woman. I never open my lips about the consarns of others now,—never; it's the wicked counthry that bites your back, not me. Why, two girleens, sitting below at the

river with their feet in the wather, making snow-balls of daisy flowers, while the blooming trees above showered blossoms on their heads, they said one to the other, 'Only the spirit's turned to new milk in Connor O'Gorman, he'd never suffer Monica to be houseless and friendless, and she such an ould pet of Misthress Margaret Lee's.' But sure it's no minding what the low country people says," continued the tramper, conceitedly. "I intend to walk, (if the pains in my bones don't desthroy me entirely,)—I intend to crawl to where she's laid in the dry ditch, and give her this corjial jist to keep the life in her."

"You do!" exclaimed Connor, "you really do? Why, then, Griffin, give me a good grip of yer hand; ye'r an honest woman, after all, and I beg yer pardon,—but don't bother yerself,—don't, that's a good soul: *I'll go myself*, and see her righted."

"O Misther Connor, Misther Connor," said the hag, with well-feigned astonishment and dismay,—"don't, don't,—I couldn't stand the reproof and the reproach of the Misthress above there,—not I; and as sure as fate you'll get into a ruction, for the man that turned her out is a great fighter intirely, and you might be drawn in: never mind the ould woman, she is only an

ould woman, and has no one belonging to her to blame you for not minding the promise you made to her son, and he going away, that ye wouldn't see her put on by any one."

"If ye don't hold yer tongue," said Connor, forgetful of his former mildness, and a good deal heated by the ardent spirit to which he had been so long unaccustomed, and which was so cunningly administered by the artful woman, "I'll tie ye up like a crocodile in your own skin: look, I haven't time to run on to the Bees-Nest, but do you go there: tell Mistress Margaret Lee the truth, and tell her, I'll not be back till I see the darlint ould woman under her own roof again. This morning, you say, he turned her out?"

"Yes."

"Bad luck to him, the poor, dirty, threacherous vagabone—bad luck to him every day he sees the green grass, the brown dust, or the heavens—clear or cloudy—or stands a chance of a bating, and that will be every day of his life, —and for a dirty thrifle of rent?"

"Yes."

"And he to call himself an Irishman!—the country's going to the bad entirely. I know whose estate it's on—but there's the ould slavery system —the land let at the highest penny to one who

could hardly make his own out of it; and that one letting to a poor man, and he giving a bit of it to another. O my country!—they say rats leave a falling house, I wish the rats left us, and it's rise we'd do. You've a dale of knowledge about furrin parts: can ye tell me what betther off our landlords are abroad than they could be at home,—are the people betther?"

"No," answered the Griffin.

"The land finer?"

"No."

"If the houses didn't plaze them, they could build others—there's every convenience—wood and wather, and stone, and marble, and pleasant places by sea and land—bright fields; and if the heart's blood of the gentry would stay with us, there would be bright eyes, where now they're red and heavy with weeping, and those would have clothing who hide from natural shame; and—but where's the good of my staying, and time flying? Only look, Mother Griffin, if I could get near a real member of parliament, which we never see, barrin' whin they're all sugar and cream, at the canvass—if I could only get face to face with one, I'd say to him, LAY A PROPERTY TAX ON THE ABSENTEES, AND LET IT BE LAID OUT FOR THE GOOD OF THE POOR; and *that* would be serving

the green little island in a way she hasn't been served yet. Well, our bright days are to come, praise be to God!—for betwixt our frinds and our enemies, we've had none of them yet! Now, mother, I'm off; show Marcus the glass, and give my message to Mistress Lee." And Connor was bounding out of the vault, all zeal, and heartiness, and goodwill to the whole world, when Mrs. Griffin called him back.

"Misther Connor—I say, Misther Connor—the flask, aroon—the flask that I was going to take the craythur—just taste it again. Well, is it sweet enough, and strong enough."

"I think," said Connor, "it's raythur too strong for an ould woman."

"Then take another sup, Misther Connor, and I'll fill it up with wather. Ah, Misther Connor, how blind we are not to know our friends. Wasn't I the fool to let my temper get the betther of me with you? wasn't I?—well to be sure! But any way, it's over now. There, now I'll put wather in it," she continued, after Connor, perfectly ignorant of the strength of what she had assured him over and over again, was nothing but a "li-quoor," had taken what would have been enough to make an English head reel round. Connor's, how-

ever, was made of sterner stuff; and not doubting for a moment the woman's honesty of purpose, he attributed the increased exhilaration to his increased happiness, and never thought a " taste of Frinch-coloured wather " could affect his nerves. He flew with all the warm feeling of his generous heart to succour the houseless widow.

The Griffin's spiteful laugh recorded the success of her evil project; and muttering many words of congratulation to herself on the triumph her plan had already achieved, she proceeded to seek Ulick, to arrange the progress of her scheme. She knew perfectly well that what Connor had already drank would lead him to take more; that she had only to provide persons ready and willing to cross his path, and there was little doubt but he would be easily led, while in a state of more than half intoxication, to take up a quarrel; for her experience had always proved the readiness with which an exhilarated man rushes into broils; besides, the internal feeling poor Connor must have had that he really intended a good action, would, under existing circumstances, draw him unconsciously forward to the perpetration of the very deeds he had so righteously refrained from during the past year. So true it is that " our

virtues would be proud, if our vices whipped them not."

I am happy, for the honour of "ould Ireland," to be able to state, as a positive fact, that old Mabel Griffin, who, during a long series of years, infested the good city of Cork and its neighbourhood, and wrought a greater quantity of mischief than falls to the lot of a score of old maids, old wives, and old widows, put together, however prone the said score might be to malice and all uncharitableness,—I am happy, I might say overjoyed, to be able to state, upon undoubted authority, that Mabel Griffin was *not* altogether an Irishwoman: her father was Irish, but Mabel herself was, fortunately for the credit of the land, born upon the high seas! During her early days, she used to appear and disappear at the various Irish sea-ports, like the swallows—no one being exactly able to tell whence she came or whither she went. She was once discovered to have resided at Limerick in man's attire; until every one saying she was a woman, she yielded at last to the *vox populi*, and appeared as a woman; and then that mysterious "everybody" said she was a man! There can be no doubt that she was a fierce and inveterate mischief-maker, of strong and violent passions, and possessed of few, if any,

of those redeeming qualities which, for the honour of human nature, we are naturally anxious to discover in the worst characters. Her coils were round poor Connor, and she gloated like a venomous spider over the hope of being revenged for the slights he had put upon her, and felt, if she obtained no recompense from Ulick, it would be sufficient payment for her trouble to destroy the anticipated happiness of the frank, free-hearted O'Gorman. While she chuckled to Ulick O'Sullivan over the credulity of her victim, she hardly permitted herself time to exult at the overthrow of his hopes, so eager was she to arrange her plan, which admitted of no delay; and Ulick, while he ably seconded, was lost in astonishment at the vigour and clearness of her rapid arrangements.

THE GROVES OF BLARNEY.

PART V.

The statement of the Griffin, that old Monica Murphy had been turned out of her cottage by one of the O'Sullivans, because she had not wherewithal to pay her rent, was perfectly true. There is nothing strikes more home to the heart than the being *forced* to leave the dwelling which has echoed to our laughter and our sighs; within whose sanctuary our joys and griefs have been consecrated; whose walls, however uninteresting they may appear to the stranger, to us are hung with a thousand tender memories, hallowed by a thousand—it may be sad or it may be sweet—remembrances; and, strange though it may seem, the most sorrowful hours of our existence are often fraught with the greatest blessings. How dear is the memory of a friend upon whom the cold and heavy

grave has closed, it may be in a foreign land; the last time he was in this room he sat beneath the shadow of that lamp—he spoke of his return —those walls echoed to the friendly music of his voice—that voice which, through evil report and good report, was loud in our defence or praise; we think, with a deep and melancholy satisfaction, that there is no blot upon his memory, and, looking upon his now vacant place, we dress up all his virtues, and, closing our eyes, could well believe him there, with his old quaint smile, his gentle jest, his sound and wise counsel; and is not that a pleasure—is it not joy to think that we *had* such a friend?—a sad, sweet joy, sobered by sorrow.

I have witnessed the most touching instances of attachment to the literally *bare* walls of an Irish peasant's dwelling on the part of its inhabitants; and I believe it is always the case where strong natural feelings have been nurtured in youth by domestic associations.

I should be almost ashamed to say how attached I become even to household furniture—silent, dumb things — familiar to my eye, till they have grown not *into* but *unto* my heart —some of them very old; the table on which I write, it is to me a dear companion—as dear, though for a very different reason, as an Irish-

man's kish that was once seized with the scanty remainder of his poor furniture for rent.

"God bless ye!" he exclaimed, "and don't take that—*it's nothing but a kish;* it's not worth twopence to you—it's falling to pieces—*but it's more to me* than thousands; *it's nothing but a kish*—but my eldest boy—he, thank God, that's not to the fore to see his father's poverty this day—he slept in it many a long night, when the eyes of his blessed mother *hadn't gone among the bright stars of heaven*, but was here to watch over him;—*it's nothing but a kish*—yet many a time little Kathleen crowed and held up her innocent head out of it to kiss her daddy; *it's nothing but a kish*—yet many a day, *in the middle of my slavery*, have I, and my wife, (the blessed saints take her soul to glory!) and five as beautiful children *as ever stirred a man's heart in his bosom*, sat round it, and eat the paytee and salt out of it, fresh and wholesome; and whin I had my *six blessings* to look on, it's little I cared for the slavery a poor Irishman is born to—*it's nothing but a kish*—but it's been with me full, and it's been with me empty, for many a long year, *and it's used to me—it knows my troubles*—for since the bed was sould from under me, *for the last gale**—what had I but it to keep my head from the could earth?—don't

* *Gale-day—Anglice,* Quarter-day.

take it—*it's nothing but a kish.*" There was a picture of misery and attachment—attachment and misery!—yet "it was nothing but a kish!"

Alas! the heart makes strange idols; but who can dispute their omnipotence? I would not give much for the man, and I would give positively nothing for the woman, who had no household gods, for I should believe such were dead to all associations, and consequently to all the finer sympathies of our nature.

Connor O'Gorman pursued his way, heated by indignation and the spirits the Griffin had so cunningly infused; he was brimful of excitement—ready to go off like a bottle of champagne in sunny weather, at the slightest touch—and not quite clear as to what he ought to do, or what he ought *not* to do—"his time was up"—he should marry Margaret to-morrow—he was resolved *not* to quarrel with the O'Sullivans—and yet he was quite resolved that Monica should be reinstated by fair means or foul in the possession of her cottage—there could be no second opinion on that head. Brimful indeed was Connor O'Gorman of excitement and happiness—his imagination filled with bright prospects of the future; no king of fairy-land ever conjured up a more gorgeous succession of enjoyments—he would not have exchanged

places with the most powerful potentate on earth. Next Sunday he should ride to chapel accompanied by his wife—*his* wife—Margaret O'Gorman; with what pride he would lift her off her horse—and how the O'Sullivans would be astonished at the brightness of his fortune—and "ould Monica," she would be there, and though she could see but little, and hear not at all, still she would bless them—and then he flourished his "*bit o' timber*," and "whooped," and capered, and fancied the trees danced "*to him*," and saw *two* where there used to be but one—and then wiped his eyes, and wondered what was over them, for there was *but one* tree, "sure enough." And after journeying in a way it would be difficult to describe—sometimes running, at other moments leaping—elevating his voice so as to sing sweet wild music, in accordance with the joy and hope that preponderated, while his indignation against the O'Sullivan who had oppressed the widow called forth a sudden burst of warlike measure, which was as suddenly altered to the warm love ditty so much more in accordance with the feelings of his heart. At last he bounded to the summit of the little hill that overhung the cabin of old Monica Murphy; he looked into the valley beneath, and saw the old sheeling resting against the side of a rock, overgrown by lichens and thick warm

moss, affording shelter to myriads of insects that were buzzing in the open sun-light. He remembered the day when old Monica's cottage was built. It was known throughout the neighbourhood that Tom O'Sullivan had no objection to let Monica the half-acre, if there was a house built on it for her; but how was old Monica to build a house?—she had neither materials nor money—her grand-daughter's hands were young and feeble, and her son had been forced to "quit the country:" old Monica was well-beloved in the neighbourhood—and what was the result?—a result by no means rare—all the "boys"—meaning thereby all the young men—who knew and pitied the old woman—assembled one bright summer morning: a neighbouring quarry furnished stones; the cementing—mud—was easily found and worked; some brought straw for the thatch, others the necessary, or part of the necessary timbers—rafters and wattles and pegs; one carpenter magnanimously offered to make a door and a window, giving his time and labour, if any one would pay for the "boords"—and the boards were paid for by a voluntary subscription on the part of the young country girls, some bestowing a penny, others twopence, all in proportion to their means. They began their work of kindness, as I have said, early one bright sum-

mer morning, and before night the walls were finished: three days saw the cottage completed, a rugged fence made round the little garden, which Connor O'Gorman caused to be planted with cabbages and potatoes, and sent, moreover, a nice "slip of a pig" to tenant the sty which he insisted should be built for its reception. Thomas Sullivan thought he had got a good tenant: he was a hard, unfeeling man, who would work good and bad alike. But the past winter had been hard upon Monica; her bees had not swarmed, her pig died, and her gentle, industrious grandchild got the measles. Monica, a nurse by profession, thought she should have lost her, and if she had, the poor creature would have spared O'Sullivan the trouble of distraining for rent, which, perhaps, heartless as he was, he would never have done but for the purpose of vexing the O'Gormans, whose faction had principally contributed to her establishment.

As Connor looked down on the little valley he felt his anger run rapidly up, like mercury when exposed to a hot fire. Monica was seated in a ditch opposite the little dwelling, consecrated not only by its humble comforts, but by the generosity of those friends who had erected an humble monument

of their good-will; the head of her sick grandchild was resting on her knees: it was a melancholy picture of helpless age and helpless youth, and Connor grasped his stick more tightly when the conversation of the two men, who had not only taken possession, but were removing her miserable furniture, was borne so distinctly on the breeze, that he heard every word they uttered.

"It's woeful, so it is," said one fellow, distinguished by the bright redness of his hair. "It's wonderful and woeful, to see the crowds that's going and gathering to the pattern, and we no chance of being in it for a purty while yet,—Sullivan tould us not to quit till he cum; and he wouldn't have bothered about it only to get a rise out of the O'Gormans these dull times."

"I don't believe that," said the other; "he'd go to the devil for money, though it's little he'll get here, for now that the woman's out, there's nothing in. Here's the inventhry, I've put it down on the back of the bill that thieving tailor sent in to the masther, and I'm affeard to let him see it, he'd go so mad: it makes no odds, to be sure, for he'd have to send it in again, in six months' time," and the speaker known as Jack Sweeney, "lawyers' man, *onct*," began to read what, for the information of my English readers

who may not have an idea of how little it takes to constitute comfort in Irish cottages, I transcribe, as Mr. Jack pronounced it:—

"Inventhry of Monica Murphy's goods:—One griddle—one kish—one platter—two stools (one with two legs)—one straw bed—one *boulsther* of the same—one blanket—a patch quilt—a noggin—a piggin—an iron pot—an ould creel—three pair and a-half of knitting needles—a spinning wheel (crack't)—a piece of looking-glass—two ould boxes, and a tub."—"There it is," he added, pausing in his inventory, and kicking it forward, a proceeding the old tub, not being accustomed to, resented by falling immediately to pieces. "See that, now!" said the fellow, "Connor O'Gorman's sisther Alley gave Monica that tub and the six pieces of chaney, but it's not like Connor, for it wouldn't bear a *kick*."

Connor was on the point of rushing down, but for once checked himself.

"It wouldn't be law, I suppose," said the other, "to seize her ould cloak, but there's a hive of bees in the garden, the stock-hive, you know; you may seize them, they're better worth the few shillings she owes than all the rest of the things put together."

"Ye'r mighty fond intirely of laying every

sort and kind of trouble on me," replied the red-headed gentleman. "Seize a hive of bees at this time of day! I'm obliged to ye, but not particularly,—do you think it's mad I am,—clean gone; well done! a hive of bees,—"

At this moment his eye caught the animated figure of Connor O'Gorman, and his companion espied our hero at the same moment.

"D'ye see that?" says one.

"I do," replied Rufus. "I thought all along some of the faction would be up about it, but I wasn't sure which; so much the better. Now, keep watch outside, and I'll keep watch inside," he added, walking very quietly into the cabin, and shutting the door, while his companion shouldered the door-post and fingered his shillala in rather a nervous manner, muttering,—"Tom O'Sullivan ought to be ashamed to lave us here, and he the instigator!"

Connor O'Gorman soon stood before him, and bowing with mock solemnity, said, "Your most obedient and very humble sarvant, sir; good morrow, gintleman, I ask your pardon for calling ye out of your name,—for want of a better, I believe, they call you Tom Staff. Och, ye'r a silent, pale, and interesting young man, I see; well then, I'll trouble ye to take yer shoulder from that door-cheek, and let me return this

darlint, murdered ould lady to her own place. —Monica, avourneen, may be on account of the many years that's on ye, ye don't know me; but I know you, asthore, and it's sorry I am to see ye with nothing over yer head for a roof but the blue sky of heaven;—well, any way, they can't take that from ye. You are ould, I know, Monica, and you knew my father and grandfather, and all my people,—but have you lost your tongue as well as your teeth? Well, Monica, dear, it was time for the teeth to go, when you had no great call for them."

"Granny, sir," says the poor sick girl, "understands you are speaking for her good; I feel her tears on my cheek, though ye can't see them on account of the hood of her cloak, which is drawn over her face to hide her trouble."

"My poor darling," said O'Gorman, "you're too sick to lift your hand to anything except your mouth, which you will do with full and plenty soon, I hope; take a drop of this, both of ye, it will raise your heart," said Connor, "but your grandmother is quite deaf, isn't she?"

"The hearing has left her, sir," replied the girl, "but granny feels all the same, as she did long ever ago; she has a deal of feeling, sir."

"So much the worse," thought Connor, as he turned again to the keeper.

"That poor woman," he said, "is as deaf as a beetle, but you are not; some of the senses are left in you, any way—so, come out of that; if you do not give up possession of that house in double-quick time, it's your skinful of broken bones you'll have."

"Help, Jack," exclaimed the coward to him who had secured himself in the cottage; "help, he's telling his stick to whisper in my ear."

"I'll tell *you* what, my fine fellow," said Connor, "it'll not whisper; when it begins it'll talk loud, a language you can understand; and the only fear I have is, that too many of my own boys, brave and true-hearted O'Gormans, will be down here before I've time to punish you to my heart's content, myself."

Just as Connor ceased speaking, the fellow who had so cunningly retreated inside the cottage, anxious to see how the land lay, yet afraid to open the door, pulled an old straw hat out of the aperture, which, when Monica first resided in her cottage, had been occupied by a pane of glass, but having been broken, was replaced by the hat, being, as Monica said, "more convanient, in regard that she could let the air in

now (God bless it!) when she pleased."—As I have said, Jack pulled out the hat very quietly, and having ascertained that Connor's back was towards him—having, moreover, heard what he said, as to the probability of the O'Gormans crowding to the rescue of the old furniture, as much, if truth must be told, from a love of fun as a love of kindness, and above all, from that longing to oppose the English laws, which seems an inherent desire in the breast of every Irish peasant,—he ventured to put forth his entire head, upon which the sun shone brightly, making its colour more conspicuous than ever, and pushing the matted locks from his eyes, endeavoured to ascertain if Connor was as yet the only O'Gorman in the field; the opening was small, and Jack's head large, but he managed to get it out notwithstanding, and just as he was turning it for the purpose, it would appear, of ascertaining if the O'Gormans were absolutely coming down the hill, Connor espied it in all its glory.

"O murder," he exclaimed, flourishing his stick, "O murder, who is the owner of that *tempting* head? Well, I never saw anything to equal that;—such a red head! that *is* a curiosity. I say, *fire the house*," he continued, while the unfortunate fellow struggled hard to draw

in his carrotty poll, that he might avoid the blow which he expected every moment to descend on it. "Fire the house, my boy!" he repeated, greatly amused at the man's consternation. "Fire the house,—your time's up, I'm thinking." Jack, under the momentary but firm conviction that the faction were going to play one of their practical tricks, and smoke him out, after the most approved fashion of badger-hunting, when he had rescued his head from peril, made no more ado, but bolted out at the door, oversetting his companion, while he screamed, "He's fired the house! he's fired the house!"

"Well," exclaimed Connor, stepping to the door, "that's the finest mistake I ever saw made in my life, and the first time a *red head* ever stood the friend of an O'Gorman;—purty ministers of the law you are,—fine fellows to guard the peace, and see that justice has her own way in the country. I'm very much obliged to you, gintlemen, I am indeed,—it's altogether new to me to get possession after this method. I'm for ever obliged to you.—Fine lawyers you are, tumbling about like herrings in a net!—have the kindness to let me know what's your pleasure, gintlemen;" and Connor, standing in the middle of the door-way, again bowed with

that sarcastic politeness which an Irishman can so well assume. Neither of the men liked to reply directly to Connor; one whispered the other, "You spake," and the other replied, "You spake;" and at last both shouted together, while watching Connor, as if he were a wild beast, "Pay the rint."

"Oh, oh," replied Connor, greatly amused at their cowardice; "oh, oh! it's the rint ye want, is it? Ah, my tight fellows, there are more than you looking for the Rint in this unfortunate country. And so, for the value of a few dirty shillings, you would turn a poor feeble creature like that out of doors, and leave her *to die* in a ditch, where you will die, some of these odd days, yourselves, please God!—or, more likely, of a dark winter night, of a slit in the windpipe, or a sudden shortness of breath. Augh," he added bitterly, "it's enough, so it is, to turn an honest lad's heart, to see the likes of you darkening the green grass and the bright harvest with your black shadows."

"We can't help it, Masther Connor," said Fire-the-house, in a whining voice; "we can't help it; we are poor, and we have no honest way of living."

"Don't tell me nonsense," said Connor, contemptuously; "haven't you *your four bones?*

couldn't you work with your hands?" I know it's hard for a boy that has a family of children to support, to live upon ninepence or tenpence a-day; but honesty is the firmest staff that poverty ever leaned upon; and you don't know, maybe, how sweet it makes the potato. Well, it's no use speaking to you; the only thing left, is for you to tell me the amount of the debt that poor helpless woman owes the tame negur, your master—that's all."

"I can't tell rightly," said Fire-the-house.

"I didn't expect you to tell me anything *rightly*," observed Connor, "because I knew you could not manage it—but wrongly—can ye tell it that way?"

"Ah, Masther Connor," replied Jack, in what he meant to be a wheedling voice; "ah, Masther Connor, you had always a funny way with you."

"Not always," said Connor; "and now I'm raythe pressed for time, so don't keep me waiting,—is it a pound?"

"Law expenses and all?"

"Ay, all!" exclaimed Connor, impatiently.

"Are you going to pay it, masther?"

"I tell you what," said Connor, "if you don't at once tell me what it is, and let me settle it, I'll—" and he whirled his shillala and

whooped—a mode of reasoning Irish cowards (and they are, I am happy to say, by no means common) understand better than any other.

"As near as I can judge," said Fire-the-house, "there's the two quarters—ten shillings—and the costs and all the expinces will be, I should think, as much more!"

"Monica, a vourneen," said Connor, "I ask your pardon, I ought not to have left you so long outside your own house,—it's not another month you shall be in it, for it 'ill go hard with one who regards you, and whose regard is a known blessing to all who have it—it will go hard with her, if you have not a little place convanient to ourselves. I'll help in the girleen;" and with a gentleness which the tenderest mother could not surpass, Connor assisted the weeping girl into the cottage. "And now," he continued, throwing down a guinea, "there's the rint and other botherums—take it."

Connor, whether from accident or design, had thrown the guinea so that whoever picked it up must come within reach of his stick—a danger neither of the men seemed disposed to incur.

"Take up that, my men of war, and pay yourselves. Why don't you take it? Do you think now, I'd condescend *to brain* such as you,

that you look askance that way? I've the greatest mind to give you a good thrashing, to prove it was the farthest in life from my thoughts. Will you take it?"

"Will you let us?" inquired Fire-the-house.

"Take it," repeated Connor.

"Will you let us?" said both the men at once. "Listen to law and raison."

"I would, with all my ears!" answered Connor, "if they were to be found in the country—in company together I mean, for we've always enough of the first, but none of the second. I suppose you call yourself Law, and that you, Fire-the-house, call yourself Reason? You certainly are a bewitching pair. Will you take it?"

"It's not a lawful tender," they replied, backing away.

"The little girl saw it made," said Connor, picking up the money; and throwing it into old Monica's cottage, he continued, "but you will take it, and much good may it do you."

Connor's benevolence was interrupted by the exclamations of the men, who began shouting at the top of their voices, "Assault and battery, murder—we're kilt intirely!"

"Oh, oh!" thought Connor, "that's the

wind of the word, is it? then as sure as life the O'Sullivans will be here presently, and all we can do is to fasten in the ould woman, and keep watch here till something is settled."

Connor took up his position, and had hardly done so, when several of the opposite faction dashed up the road, headed by Ulick himself. A few angry words were exchanged between him and Connor. Sullivan was more than half-drunk, and Connor unusually excited. The wild, reckless fellows who were with him made matters worse. Those who have not witnessed the rapidity with which blows follow words in Ireland, can have little conception of the scene that ensued; far more rapidly than I can write, blows were aimed by four or five "bits of timber," at the same time, at the same person; and Connor, literally in defence of his own life, was obliged to ward them off; from warding off, he proceeded to attack. Once fairly in the fray, he proved that his retirement had rather increased his skill; like a giant refreshed with sleep, he hurled destruction around him; he could have trampled on his prostrate foes; for every stroke of his shillala told upon some one or other of his assailants. Ulick was the only one who maintained his ground; though evidently worsted,

he had the advantage of Connor in personal strength, but Connor was more agile, and knew better what he was about. Ulick rushed to the encounter with the wildness and ferocity of a buffalo; Connor warded off the blows, and struck home; then Connor had the support of the cottage behind him, which was a great advantage, and which he took care not to forsake. Nevertheless, he was waxing faint. One of Ulick's well-aimed blows told upon his head, and he was struggling against considerable dizziness and loss of blood, when the cry of "O'Gorman aboo!" was raised on the summit of the green hill he had descended, and a party of his own friends, among whom was Marcus Roche, intent upon preventing mischief, rushed to the rescue; and as an addition was made nearly at the same moment to the O'Sullivan faction, the engagement—for so it may be really called—became general. It was most fortunate for Connor that his friends arrived when they did, for otherwise there can be little doubt, taking into consideration Ulick O'Sullivan's temper of mind and character, that Connor would never have seen the Bee's Nest or its fair mistress again. More than half the murders in Ireland are perpetrated under the excitement produced by whiskey. I wish some

of our "patriots" could witness the effects of that accursed beverage as I have witnessed them, and I am sure they would agree with me, that the introduction of a quieting, and not a *maddening* draught, would go a great way in subduing the riots and dissensions which disgrace the annals of my country. I would recommend one—Guinness's porter—in the words in which it was recommended to me by a genuine Irish peasant:—"That's the stuff that makes the arm strong and the heart stout, without being savage."

After the exchange of hundreds of blows, which were mingled with shouts, and screams, and wild halloos, the O'Gormans triumphed; and having fairly beaten the O'Sullivans off the field, Connor, utterly exhausted, was seated, as they said, "as comfortable as a king upon his throne," on the door of Monica's cottage—taken off its hinges for the express purpose—and borne in triumph along the road leading to Blarney; while his friends danced and shouted, and Marcus, ever kind and thoughtful, remained with the widow, to see how he could serve her whom Connor had again established in her poor home. It was in vain that Connor protested he could walk, they had resolved to carry him a "piece of the road for good luck," and, indeed, he was not sorry they persisted in their determination, for he could hardly move—

at least, so he thought then, as he wiped his hot and fevered brow, and saw that the kerchief was still dabbled with blood, (a circumstance his companions hardly cared to notice.) The knowledge that *this* was Midsummer Eve increased the burning of his brow; and the playful words Flora had that morning spoken, "Come! yes, Midsummer Eve *is* come, but *not* gone yet," smote upon his heart, and he kept murmuring to himself, while closing his eyes against the burning sun, "Not gone—yet!—Not—gone—yet!" Though his companions still "harrood," their shouts conveyed no triumph to his exhausted spirits. He had done what was right;—and yet!——

What would have followed the "yet" can hardly be known to posterity, for Connor never knew himself. His progress was stayed by the Griffin coming to his side, and having stopped the bearers, commencing a long monologue, mourning, though no tears ran down her cheeks, her "misfortunate tongue—to think, a vourneen, you should, through the means of my ugly tongue, have heard of it—at all at all; and he now bate and torn like a mad dog, or a *celler-rat*, as the Frinch says. O the pride of the counthry? And this day, of all the days in the year! And so you bate them off, dear, and gave Ulick a *snuff-box*, I'll

be bound, though he has nothing to put in it—but ill-will! and faith he always has a good stock on hand to dispose of, *of that*; the way Ireland, poor thing! do be with her misfortunes. Take a drop of corjial dear—do—it will raise your heart.—Tim Stacey—I say a prayer more for you than I do for ere a boy in the barony, Tim—you see you want it.—Don't be afraid of it, Masther Connor—don't—just take a good big sup, your lips look druthy." And Connor took what would intoxicate a strong Englishman, if we consider the excitement he had previously undergone.

"You gave my message?" inquired Connor, as he returned the flask.

"To be sure I did, and she's in all the joy of the world expecting you. Oh, Misther Connor, how ever was you drawn into a fight? Take my advice, John Ryley's dacent public is hard by; stop there, Misther Connor, and wash yerself, and get another coat, and get rid of all tokens of the bother; just *attendey*, as the Frinch says, till the heat goes out of the sun's body, and by that time you'll be cooled. It wouldn't do, would it, sir, to go to the Bee's Nest as you are now? it would any way make *her* very miserable."

"It would—it would," repeated the always

affectionate Connor; "it would surely—and you're right. So, boys, we'll stop at John Ryley's, and be able to get something to make us look dacent, and you'll get something to drink my happiness—in moderation, boys—in moderation—because, ye see—it must be in moderation!" And his followers shouted with wild delight at perceiving that Connor had already outstepped the bounds of that moderation of which he spoke. So true it is, that our friends always see something in our failings which leads them to excuse their own.

The greater number of Ryley's family were gone to the pattern, but there was a bare-legged serving-wench, several children, and the old grandmother, all ready and willing to serve "the cratur" to the O'Gormans, who forcibly seized a fiddler, who was on his way rather tardily to the same place. Connor could hardly stand when he descended from the rude triumph with which he had been honoured, and the Griffin managed very artfully to increase his intoxication, while she skilfully made him believe she was ministering to his sobriety. The slight—(for, after all, it was but slight)—the slight cut on his temple, was bound with his green neckerchief, and if he could have walked, he would have set out for Blarney,

which was not half a mile from Ryley's. His friends, poor fellow! accelerated his ruin, and long before sunset Connor's vow had been doubly broken! Still, he knew what he was about; and great was his confusion at the entrance of Peter Swan, who said he had been despatched by Margaret to ascertain where Connor was.

Peter was by no means sober himself. "A stiff tumbler" of whiskey-punch went a great way to disorder his very weak intellect, and there never was a man yet, who had taken too much, that did not want more.

"They told me," said Peter, with great gravity of manner, "they told me, as I came along, that I should see a real *H*irish row—most likely the *h*information was correct—this is like an *h*insurrection in Bartlemy fair—much worse. Potsheen was what I got—I put it down in my memorandum-book; all for the honour of old England. Gentlemen," he said, looking round on the wild assemblage with the smirk of a Ludgate-hill shopman, "you will have no objection to drink prosperity to England."

"We'd raythor drink it to Ireland," said one, winking on the rest; "she wants it more."

"Very good, gentlemen," said the peace-loving Peter, "it's the same to me. We are united, you know."

"But not to me," said a little scowling Paddy, blinking his eyes, which the fumes of whiskey and tobacco had made very red, and swearing an oath that made Peter start.

"Oh, as you please, sir—gentlemen, I mean," said the cockney, smirking more widely than before.

The scene was curious and painful: Connor, conscious that he could not stand erect, was still struggling between the feeling of bravo, the humiliation which he experienced, and the resolve not to let Peter perceive the state he was in. He could not reason, he could only feel. The room would have been a study for Teniers. Connor was seated on a long settle that stretched under the arch of the chimney; the Griffin crouched on a box near his feet, her basilisk eye watching every movement in the cloudy apartment; Peter sat with three or four of the *haboriginees*, as he would have called them, at a table which had once been round, but had been so roughly treated, that its shape was now a difficult matter to determine; the fiddler, exalted on the top of a sack of potatoes,

that stood against the wall, drew his bow right merrily, while his wife ever and anon gave him to drink from a broken-nosed jug, which she constantly replenished—that is to say, to prevent his "breaking the back-bone of a tune," she held the vessel to his lips while he played and the *company* danced on—first one, then the other, while several crowded in, both "girls" and "boys," attracted by the magic of "Rakes of Mallow," or "Corporal Casey." An Irish jig is amazingly exciting—the rapid motion—the loudly-expressed compliments and approbation of the lookers on—the "whips," and "whooes," and "whoops"—the snapping fingers, not unlike in sound what people, by a stretch of that mental net-work, poetry, call "the merry *music* of the castanet"—their national buoyancy —all combine to raise the spirits; and when Irish spirits are raised, we at this sober side of the herring-pond have little idea of the height they mount to.

"Pray, honest gentlewoman," inquired Peter of the fiddler's wife, "tell me, upon the virtue of your *h*oath, how many tumblers of that *h*intoxicating fluid could your husband drink?"

"More than you'd like to pay for," was the reply.

This caused a laugh, but Peter had gained

bravery, and so nothing daunted persisted in his question.

" I'll tell you, thin, for fear your curosity would spile your growth, and that would be a pity. He never can count afther twenty-seven."

" There's a beautiful head on the fiddler," said one of the fellows, sarcastically ; " wouldn't yer honour like to draw it ?—it's a strong head, you see, sir."

" It is," said Peter, with the gravity of an owl.

" And a *strong head* would be a curosity where you come from, I'm thinking ; they're famous, sir, I'm tould, for *wake* heads and *could* hearts. Draw the fiddler's head, sir."

" Not now, thank you, sir," replied the cockney ; and ill-suppressed laughter ran round the room.

It would be impossible to describe the state of Connor's mind. Despite his intoxication, his heart was with Margaret, and still he felt he was perfectly unfit to appear before her. He was violently out of temper, for when a man is displeased with himself, he is sure to be angry with others. He was abashed—ashamed. In his gayest days, he had never frequented public-houses—he was above it—and yet cir-

cumstances over which he had hardly any control had baffled his resolves, and his frank and generous disposition made him the victim of a revengeful, designing old woman. He had often been told by Margaret how necessary caution would be to his well-doing in the world, to the firmness and dignity of his character; but it was so at variance with his nature, that poor Connor stood little chance of ever being a prudent man; and were it not for the crowd that surrounded him, he could have torn his hair, and beaten his head against the wall—he felt positively savage, and longed for some object on whom to expend the over-boiling of his temper, rendered furious by the effects of the spirits he had drank and the blight of his warmest hopes. The blessed, happy day he was to have spent with his betrothed was closing into evening, yet there was he, with a broken head, more than half tipsy, in a public-house, within half a mile of the cottage of Margaret Lee.

"I say, Mrs. Griffin," he whispered to the old hypocrite, "don't you think I could get home—I mean to the Bee's Nest—now?"

"You'd frighten the life out of the purty widdy, if she saw you—the shake of the blow still staggering you, Misther Connor; bad luck

to the hand that hit it for evermore! No—keep asy—keep asy, and I'll see if I can't manage it a little bit for you, till the cool of the evening, and then—then you'll get there. Take this drop of stuff I mixed for you—it 'ill ease yer head—and I'll watch by ye. Maybe you could have a little wink of sleep—a little, you know—well, there, I'll say nothing more."

The confiding Connor drank "the stuff," which of course made him worse. He fell into a half-stupefied dose for a few moments, but when he awoke, the room was reeling violently round, and the people were loudly demanding that no less a person than the Griffin should give them a toast: she accordingly gave "Prosperity to Ireland." This was drank with acclamation; but Connor got it into his head that the Griffin's toast was disrespectful to his country.

"You don't understand me," said the Griffin, her ill-temper putting in peril her design.

"What do you mean," said Connor, furiously, "by saying that I do not understand you? Do you mean that I am any *way overtaken*, and could not understand ye? because if ye did, ye Griffin, you told a lie—I say a lie!"

"No, no!" expostulated the woman, "I

didn't think you were overtaken—what would overtake you? There, be quiet now, brave *garsoon*, as the Frinch says."

"Mistress Mabel Griffin," said Connor, very gravely, "I do expect you to treat me with common decency; you are, my good woman, for all the world like a cow that gives a good pailful of milk, and then kicks it down; you called me *brave* at the first going off—well and good—it would not become me to contradict a comely, respectable, responsible, sort of a peddling, smuggling, travel-the-counthry ould devil like you. More be tokens I'm an O'Gorman, and not one of the name but is born with a shillala in his fist—see that; so that may stop as it is—brave by name, brave by nature—and enough about it. But what made you spoil all, and spill the milk, by tacking the other to it? You called me brave—brave—gorsoon—that was it—a brave gorsoon! Now, Mistress Griffin, ma'am, a gorsoon is nothing more nor less than a brat of a boy."

"My dear sir, Misther Connor," said the Griffin, quite satisfied that her last potation had fully accomplished her purpose, and that Connor was as "*far overtaken*" as she could desire, and no longer himself—"my dear sir, that is because you are not larned in the living

languages. A brave *garsoon* is what the Frinch call Bonyparte, and Hercules, and the seven champions, and Charleymange—a brave *garsoon* is an emperor, dear."

"Then, old woman," exclaimed poor Connor, "I'll be an emperor; I see it now forenint me; a brave *goroon* does not mean a brave boy—you would make an emperor, let alone a king, of me. Oh, Mrs. Griffin, if I could only make human christian nature of you, wouldn't I be proud—but the heavens above look down upon you, Mabel Griffin, you are nothing but an ould woman. But I'm not proud—I don't mind drinking with you, or—even fighting with you! Come, Peter, you little weak-headed Englishman! drink—drink! —there is not a head-ache in a hogshead of it."

"Ah," replied Peter, mournfully, "I always find a head-ache in the second tumbler."

"Then," exclaimed Connor, ready-witted even in his cups, "can't ye *skip the second and go on to the third.*" A roar followed this, and the whole world was forgotten by Connor.—"Peter," he continued, "let me give you a lesson in Irish fighting; it will be better for ye than your book; my hand's in so beautiful, afther the taste of practice I had."

Peter waxed cowardly, and tried to slink out

of the room, but Connor would not permit it, and insisted that he should either indulge them with a song, a toast, or a fight.

"Then," said Peter, "I'll give you a toast I learnt to please the Irish, and this it is:—'Dam your canals—sink your mines—consume your manufactures!'"

It would be impossible to pourtray the confusion that followed this toast, which not more than three in the company understood; the blind fiddler was tumbled from his throne, and like a deposed monarch grovelled among his former subjects.

"He's insulted the counthry," roared one fellow.—"He's an informer," said another.—"A thraiter," exclaimed a third.—"Take him, and dive him, and duck him," said Connor, "only mind, don't forget him by mistake in the bog-hole; that wouldn't be hospitable."

"The boys" hastened to obey Connor's command, for mischief is eldest born of Mercury, and the poor cockney tourist whom Connor had forgotten was Margaret's cousin, was borne out of the public-house, much against his will.

"But didn't you see it though," said a countryman to Connor, when the residue, who had not gone forth to "tache the cockney to swim,"

had ceased laughing at the joke, "didn't you see it Misther Connor?"

"See what?"

"Why the sinse of it.—"Dam your canals," if they warn't dammed, sure all the wather would break through."

Connor caught the meaning, and staggered after the merciless administers of extemporaneous law; he had not, however, proceeded far, when he became perfectly oblivious of his purpose, everything whirled round, and yet, he almost instinctively kept on the road to the Bees' Nest; old Mabel followed at a distance. "It 'ill do now," she muttered to herself, "and if I'm not mistaken, though Mistress Margaret would not come to a public-house, she'll be on the watch, from what I took care she heard."

After meandering a good way along the high road, Connor struck into a field, a short cut to the village, and went on without any accident, until he came to a stile leading to a meadow that communicated with Margaret Lee's garden; walking on level ground was one thing, climbing a stile another; he got one foot up, then took it down, and at last sat upon the topmost stone of the rude wall.

"The fairies," he said, "do be dancing of a

Midsummer Eve, and I'll go bail they're beginning now—the sun—yes, that red chap over there *is* the sun—well, he's setting—steady, Connor, I never did see the sun go whirling about that way before—never—but that *is* the sun, and this is a shillala, and this——"

And then he lifted up his voice, and gave thick utterance to one of those vile, comical drinking songs, that militate so much against the sobriety of the "Lords of the creation," and he thumped and knocked the stones with his blackthorn to mark the time :—

"The devil a day have I for drink,
But Saturday, Sunday, Monday,
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday,
Saturday, Sunday, Monday.
The devil a day have I for drink
But Sat——"

The repetition of his lament was interrupted by the appearance of a tall woman enveloped in a blue cloak at the opposite side of the stile. She stood there silently, her hood concealing her face.

Connor's native politeness had not altogether deserted him; he removed his hat, and half staggering, half clambering over the stile, stood before the woman, and said, "Ah, my

colleen das! can Connor O'Gorman do anything to oblige you? Can he—speak a vourneen—won't you speak? O dear! it's a bit of modesty you are treating us to, is it? As if any modest young woman would be out of a Midsummer Eve by herself, and it almost dark. Let me make a looking-glass of your eyes, my darling!" And as he attempted to throw open the hood, the cloak dropped from her shoulders, and Margaret Lee looked Connor O'Gorman in the face. At first he staggered back, then assumed a confident drunken swagger; and continued, while every fibre of poor Margaret's frame was almost convulsed with emotion—"Well, it's mighty fond entirely you must be of me, to come afther me this way. My purty Peggy, you have maybe heard——"

"I have heard!" said Margaret; "I have heard and seen more than I expected ever to hear or see in this world."

"I've got a flask here, that a woman (don't be jealous) gave me; if I could get at it, maybe you'd take a drop. It 'ill keep the cold pain out of your heart, and—and—the hard word out of your mouth!"

Margaret's indignation burst forth. "Dare not," she exclaimed, "dare not to insult me;

to-morrow past, I could not have recalled the right which still I hold over myself. Back, sir. Make *you* the guide and guardian of *my* child! *My* husband to be noted as a fighting, drinking brawler!"

"Margaret!" said Connor, sobered in some degree by her vehemence.

"Go to!" she continued; "spare me the sound of the dear voice I loved—it is now untuned and thick. Sir, when I wed, I'll wed a man whose *reason* rules him; one who can stand or walk erect, either in sun or moonlight—who, having made a good resolve, knowing it good, can keep it. O Connor, Connor," she added, in tones of the deepest anguish, "my cheeks are hot with blushes at your shame! When you can think and feel, remember this—if you had been but firm, had want or woe assailed you, Margaret Lee would have cherished—loved you—DIED FOR YOU—now she says FAREWELL FOR EVER!"

Margaret having so said, rushed towards her own dwelling, while Connor leant against the stile, subdued and spirit-broken—unable to reply, yet perfectly conscious of the import of her words.

So ended their Midsummer Eve.

THE GROVES OF BLARNEY.

PART VI.

The morning, the soft, balmy, dewy morning had advanced until it was nearly seven o'clock, and the half-idiot sister of Ulick O'Sullivan was watching for her brother's return, at the door of the dwelling he called his own, and which was a meet abode for such a man; it was situated on the brow of a small promontory of the Bograh mountains, where the chain commences which stretches into the neighbouring county, and it overhung a deep, shingly dell, through which in winter a mountain-torrent galloped freely into the lower valley, and then diverged into many small rivulets that fertilised the meadows of the plain. If a stranger had viewed the cottage from the highroad, he would be imme-

diately perplexed to know how it was approached, but the hardy peasants found safe footing on the stones, and Aileen skipped like a wild goat from crag to crag, and knew every spot from the base to the summit of the mountain whereon they dwelt; there was, however, a path known to Mabel Griffin and a few other venerable dealers in contraband, winding amongst rocks and stones, wild-broom and furze, but it was visible only when you looked from the height towards the valley. Aileen's hair was drawn up at the back of her head: her feet were uncovered, and, as she leant against the wall, which formed a dark back-ground, she seemed like one of those Grecian figures, which we read of frequently, but which are rarely seen. She twirled her distaff more leisurely than was her wont, and beguiled her employment by snatches of a farewell ditty:—*

O, a blessing and a tear,
And I part from all I know;
But my heart will still be here,
Though to other lands I go.
Farewell, farewell!

* These words are set to music by Mr. Alexander Roche; he has thrown into them a wild, deep feeling, that does honour to the verse, and the accomplished composer.

O, the wanderer far away
From his household hearth may roam;
But the wanderer still can pray
For the friends he leaves at home.
Farewell, farewell!

O, a farewell, 'tis the last,
And my heart it will not break;
But my tears are falling fast,
As the dreary word I speak.
Farewell, farewell!

O, a mournful lot is mine,
As the parting hour draws near;
All I have to give is thine,
Take a blessing and a tear!
Farewell, farewell!

She sung this song, sometimes breaking off in the middle of one verse, then running on to another. She was also busied about her brother's breakfast; she laid all things ready with her own hands, though there was a savage looking serving girl who assisted, and whose low, contracted brow, bronzed complexion, and sullen scowl, made her resemble the threatened rival of pretty Molly Carew,

"Short and dark like a could winter's day,"

and an admirable foil to the delicate beauty of the child-like Aileen.

A hundred times did Aileen go in and out of the cottage, rendered more than usually restless by her brother's absence; at times, too, dark,

swarthy faces, would look out from the door, peer down the mountain and up at the sky, and then disappear, leaving no token even in the interior of the cottage of their almost supernatural visits; they appeared and disappeared from behind Ulick O'Sullivan's bed, which was decently curtained by blue check, leaving no doubt that there must be a place of concealment in the immediate neighbourhood, that had, at all events, one outlet in the cottage. At last it seemed that Aileen's hopes were answered; she threw her distaff on a stone bench, which flanked the door, and uttering a wild cry that was echoed by the rocks, sprang lightly forward, now jumping upon a stone that appeared as though it would roll from beneath her feet, then clinging to a wavering broom that would have bent under a blackbird's weight, she swayed herself down and round until she stood by her brother's side; he was proceeding slowly up the steep in earnest conversation with the Griffin, who had just finished recounting the success of her yesterday's plot against poor Connor. Nothing shows the baseness of base minds so strongly as the exultation they evince at the stumbling of one of high repute, whose virtues have been, to such, a perpetual reproach.

"And thin," she continued, "to hear how she

gave it him, bidding him farewell just as the queen in a play would say, 'Get out, ye blaguard;' they little thought I was so near them! I'll tell you who was nearer——"

"Ould Nick—ould Nick—ould Nick," jibbered Aileen, as she ran backwards before them. pointing at the Griffin, with her taper finger, and laughing between her words.

"Come here, poor child," said Ulick, "why, your eyes are red,—has Aileen been crying?"

"The hawk flew over, the hawk flew under,
The hawk was struck in his nesting-tree.
Ah me! ah me!"

'Were you afeard for me, for Ulick, Aileen?" said the man, whom no one would suppose, from his bearing or character, to have had an atom of tenderness in his nature; and yet no father could have caressed a helpless child more fondly than Ulick caressed his mindless sister.

"It's all ready," she muttered, "the breakfast, the stirabout,—and Jack is in the pit-hole, a new pot at work, and the steam so strong, and the—hush—the new moon is come, and the boys have been rooting the earth out all night, as the black man did in the grave-yard;—hush—the sun has been going many hours, and so has Aileen, but the sun is not sleepy—Aileen is sleepy."

"Ah, ye lazy omadawn!" said the Griffin with her usual ill-temper, "it would be fitter for you to be in bed, than bothering the life out of yer brother, you!"

"Cat's claws," exclaimed the girl maliciously, getting out of the Griffin's reach, while she opened her fingers and extended them, "cat's claws, cat's claws,—long, ould cat's claws."

The Griffin stooped to pick up a stone, intending to fling it at her, knowing she was as fond as a monkey of playing tricks when she could do so in safety.

"Drop it," said O'Sullivan fiercely, "drop it this minute. If you can't behave well to that poor *crathur* on whom the hand of the Almighty falls so heavily, you'd better keep away altogether, for I tell you no one shall do or say an unkind thing to Aileen, but I'll punish 'em."

"She's always mocking and tormenting, and setting the children afther me," replied the Griffin, "can't she behave?"

"It's ill manners for you to be troubled by the like of my poor sister; sure you wouldn't expect a mountain sheep to prache a sermon like Father Horragan or Friar Mulvany; every thing according to its nature; and she's innocent, and that's enough about it; but as I was saying

before, what does the bit of fraction they have had signify,—they'll make it up again."

"If it was an Irish quarrel out and out, and she an Irish woman *born*, they might," replied the Griffin, "becase the Irishwomen are so soft and forgiving in their natures, and used to see the men now and agin *make bastes* of thimselves, and making *tornadoes*, as the Frinch says, and *whirlpools*, as we says at sea, with their tempers. Did I evir tell you the way I sarved my first husband that had that fashion?" inquired this gentle specimen of the fair sex, as she paused, fatigued by the ascent, and drew her flask from her pocket, which she offered to Ulick with the usual invitation of "take a drop," although the most wonderful part of the Griffin's history was, that notwithstanding the number of "drops" she took, no one ever saw her intoxicated. "Well, poor little man, he had been a sort of play-actor at fairs and such like, and used to carry the world before him in Richard the Third, the grate Juke of Gloucestershire, (you've hard tell of Gloucester cheeses,) and was mighty grand in it intirely, playing it with his own hump, which he, being the manager, and having the pick and choose of all the plays and things, needn't have done, if he'd ha'

wanted a hump, which, poor man, he did not. Well, ye see the way he had of carrying the world and his show-box before him through all England, gave him a hectoring sort of fashion that it was hard for me to put up with, for though one does marry a man, one has no call to marry his humours; and to be sure he used to talk as grand about his '*properties*,' as if he was an Irish landhoulder, with nothing at all a year!"

"No slurs upon the counthry, ma'am, if you please," said Sullivan with polite dignity.

"I mane none, sir," replied the Griffin, "for though you hould out I wasn't born on the sod, you can't deny my right to the slipper," (the brogue,) and she growled a laugh. "Well, the little man had a way of hectoring, and I said to him, says I, 'Nicholas,' says I, 'if you go on speaking in the disrespectful way you do of me, I'll punish you,' says I, 'I will, and that's fair warning.' Now, Misther O'Sullivan, I ask you as a gentleman wasn't it fair warning?"

"Most husbands, I believe, are punished without any warning," said Sullivan.

"Well, still, poor dear! he went on with his impidence, *brouillarding*, as the Frinch says, about everything, until one day, (he was but a little scrap of a man, hump and all,) he put me

past my patience, and I caught him up this way, and shaking him as if he was a puppy-dog, I says, 'Is this your gratitude, you shrimpeen, afther my marrying a play-actor, what none of my forefathers did? and sitting for a 'Talian woman, Joolet, in a balcony, while you, stuck all over with black buttons, made the fair laugh at Romeeyou;—now,' says I, 'I'll just put you into that baste of a thrunk where you keep your properties,—a purty property you are for any honest woman,—and, poor thing! sure enough I put him in, and turned the hasp under, thinking it would give him plenty of air, which it did, and then I sat upon the thrunk to prevent his rising the lid intirely so as to get out, and kept amusing him as well as I could, telling him of his faults, and showing him what a good wife I had been, making him sensible, which he wasn't inclined to, being mighty vain, as indeed most of them sort are—it comforts the craythurs,—well suddenly I was called on account of the pig, that never would go through his exercise, (he was an Irish pig,) unless I held a maley pratee at the wing."

"One would think," said O'Sullivan, wishing to appear informed where he knew nothing, "that if it was the wing of a goose or turkey, he'd rather have had it than the potato; our pigs haven't left poor Aileen a chicken."

"Poor Aileen's chicks! poor Aileen's chicks!" said the girl, who during the Griffin's wild-goose tale had gathered a bunch of fern, and was fanning her brother's burning face.

"Lord!" exclaimed the Griffin, pulling the ends of her scarlet Barcelona more tightly through her apron-string, "how necessity it is for people to see the world; the wing, Misther O'Sullivan, in playhouses, means a piece of a boardeen, stuck from the top to the bottom. Well, I ran away, thinking he'd come out; and indeed, having given him my advice, I felt I had done my duty, and left him to himself until near tea-time, whin I went into the place, and see the lid of the thrunk was down. 'How tidy he's grown,' says I, quite innocent like to myself, and thought I'd see if the turban he played the Turks in, wasn't much scrooged; well, I found the spring (it had a spring) shot, and, poor thing, when I shot it back, there he was!"

"Wasn't he angry?" asked Ulick.

"No, poor thing," replied the Griffin, shaking her head, "he was dead!"

"Dead!" exclaimed Ulick.

"As a sod o' turf!" answered the lady, "'twas his passion that finished him; we supposed he kickt at the lid and it fell, and indeed the coffin

he took wasn't much bigger than a boy's, and that was the last bother I had with him."

"Were you tried for it?" inquired Ulick, resuming his progress.

"Tried for what?" replied the Griffin.

"For the manslaughter——?"

"Why what would you make of the laws at all at all," answered the woman — "manslaughter for such a bit of an accident—poor thing! I was very lonesome after it!"

"For how long?" asked Ulick.

The Griffin laughed.—"It's not right to murn too much at what's the Almighty's will," she replied—like too many in the world, twisting a good sentiment to her own bad purpose.

Ulick was soon after busied with his private still—for the opening carefully concealed behind his bed led to an excavation in the mountain, where illicit distillation was practised sometimes on an extensive, sometimes on a smaller scale: there were many ways of escape from the principal cavern where the business was carried on with a single, simple apparatus, easily removed, and abundant places of concealment. The aperture through which the smoke passed was managed with exceeding skill, at the foot of a rock, which concealed it effectually from observation. Here Ulick O'Sullivan had at

one time carried on a very extensive system of fraud—which latterly he had almost abandoned—and here with some of his accomplices he might be termed secure from legal interference—for the place was admirably constructed—full of holes and corners—a complete labyrinth under the grey rocks and brown earth, which looked picturesque only at a distance—so utterly drear and barren was it when closely approached. During the day the Griffin descended into the valley.

Before the result of her migration is detailed, I must return to the cottage of Margaret Lee.

About the hour when Aileen saw her brother and his female Mephistophiles ascending the mountain, Connor O'Gorman and Marcus Roche were walking round and round Margaret's garden, watching for her appearance. The previous night Marcus had found Connor in the position Margaret left him—sobered by her reproof, and resolved to tell her his story the first thing in the morning. Marcus, however, had discovered from Flora that some secret influence had been at work, and suspected the Griffin to be the mischief-maker. Connor's anxiety prevented sleep, and Marcus was so anxious for his friend's justification, that having accompanied him to his home, he re-

mained with him all night, and yielded to Connor's impatience, which prompted him to be under Margaret's windows, long before her hour for rising.

"Sister!" said Flora, stealing on tip-toe into her chamber, and yet trying to awake her,—"sister—are you awake?" Then a little louder—"Are you awake, sister?—Sister,—are you awake, I say?"

"Hush, Flora," said little Hector, sitting up in his bed—"don't you see her eyes are shut?—don't wake her, aunt!"—and Flora withdrew from the room; but in about ten minutes re-entered it with the same inquiries.

Still Margaret's eyes were closed—though Flora—perhaps it was only her imagination—but Flora *fancied*, at all events, that her eyelids were wet with tears.—"I think, anty Florry," whispered the child, poking his little rosy feet out of bed—"I think I'll get up—for Luath has been whining so below, that I'm sure Connor's in it, and I want to see him."

"Go to sleep, Hector," said Margaret.

"I can't, mammy."

"If any one, Flora," said Margaret, "wishes to see me to-day, say I am ill, my head aches violently—and, I do not choose, Hector, to go down stairs." This was enough—Flora closed

the door, and the poor boy concealed his head beneath the pillow. Flora did not make her appearance till near nine o'clock, and then Connor received a sarcastic compliment on the beauty of his countenance — "Greatly improved," she said, "by the mark on his brow." Though Marcus Roche bore all the bantering bestowed upon himself by his beloved with stoical philosophy, yet he would not suffer her to wound Connor's feelings; and instantly put the transaction in such a light, that Flora, who always jumped from one conclusion to another, no matter how opposite they were, immediately looked upon Connor as a martyr, and saw the mischief-maker through the mischief, though she could not understand the motive. Flora, moreover, volunteered the assertion, that the moment Margaret was told the cause, she would pardon the effects,—but she ought to have remembered, that her sister was not only *proud*, but firm—obstinate it might almost be called; and that the shock her feelings had received would not quickly pass.

Flora would have flown into a passion, and suffered her anger to evaporate in words, and tears, and noisy reproaches;— but Margaret pondered in her heart. Marcus understood the young widow's character better.

"Take my advice, Connor," said he; while Connor, having rested his arms on the table, hid his face upon them—"take my advice—do not urge Margaret to see you to-day—the wound is too fresh to be suddenly healed. Flora and I will put everything in a proper point of view, and with a little patience——"

"It's no use, Marcus," said Connor,—"I'll not stir a foot out of this till I see her. Many a word's spoken from the teeth out, that never had anything to do with the heart—the heart! Sure it's my own that's crushed as flat as the crown of my hat. I that would lay my hands under the soles of her feet—I that—O, Marcus, Marcus!—if she knew the truth, it's not from me she'd turn."

"My dear fellow, if you leave it to time, she will relent. Now her mind is full of last night's scene; she told me with bitter tears, before I went to you, that her great misery was, her newly-sprung belief of your unfitness to guide and protect her child."

"Sure," said Connor, with great *naïvete*, "she'd guide us both; and as to protection!—well, God help all mankind!—if we are to be altogether judged by a wild turn; was not I provoked, drawn into it? and as to what I took, the stuff that old wretch gave me must have been doctored."

" And she must have said something to Margaret that I did not hear," said Flora; " though when the Griffin came, I did my best to hear, for I saw all was not going right."

" Go to Margaret now, Flora," entreated Connor, " and tell her I am almost mad."

" I'll swear to *that*," said Flora, " for you have eat no breakfast, and will hardly let me eat mine."

Flora did go to her sister, and in about five minutes afterwards, down came Hector; he went and kissed Marcus. " Come to me, darling," said Connor.

" No," replied the boy, looking with pretty gravity in his face, " you are a bad man, and made mammy cry." This little incident struck Connor to the heart, and he could hardly have been more wounded, when Flora, with tearful eyes and a flushed cheek, told him Margaret had made up her mind not to see him that day. " I can't tell him all," she whispered to Marcus, " because it would break his heart. My sister," she said aloud, " is much hurt at your abandoning her cousin to the ferocity of a party of drunkards, and Marcus can tell you, that had he not fortunately met them, he might have been killed." Connor offered neither apology nor explanation for this, but suddenly

placing a chair in the centre of the room, he exclaimed,

"Then, by all the blessed books that ever were shut and opened, here I'll stay, until she herself desires me to go. I leave it to you, Flora, supposing that Marcus had been drawn in, as I was, last night, would you, Flora, be as cruel hard as Margaret is to me?"

"Indeed, Connor," she replied, "I would not. I tell you honestly, and there's my hand on't, I would give my little finger to see that fellow with a black eye, a broken head, or any little token of warfare about him. Marcus, why did not *you* restore Monica to her cabin, and beat the bailiffs? Go away, when you are even stirred, you are just like a dish of skimmed milk."

"She could not, Flora," said Connor—"she could not turn me off, as she'd turn a dog out, without so much, as God be with you. I could not believe she would be so cruel unjust. Flora, I entreat you, go to her again; just ask her to see, to hear me—O, it's a poor case indeed, when years of love and labour are forgotten for an hour's sin!"

"It's no use, Connor," she replied; "my sister's life has been a long sacrifice to what she considers her duty. She bade me tell you that

she wished you health, long life, and happiness, and that she need not repeat what you already know."

"Sure, it's long sorry I'd be to trouble her to repate it," he said. "Wish me health and happiness—that's like giving a man a drink of poison, and bidding him go to sleep easy and comfortable. Flory, I've known you since you were a dawshy child, the height of my knee—you wouldn't deceive me."

"No, Connor," she answered, "that I would not. I'll go to her again, if you desire it."

"Bless you, dear Flora," he exclaimed, "do tell her how it was—tell her—oh my grief!—you can't tell her how I feel, for it's known only to my own heart. Come back before you go; and listen—tell her, that she's dearer to me than the air I breathe; that every pulse of my heart tells the letters of her name; that anything she bids me do I will—barring it's to forget her, and *that* I never can, while the grass grows or water runs—that if she'll only let me see her, I'll show her how it wasn't my fault, only my misfortune; but that I'll do black and bitter penance for it, as if it was a deep sin."

"Any more repentance," said Flora, run-

ing off, "for by Saintee Shelah, you've given me as much to carry as if you had committed the seven deadly sins."

"She will come round in time," said Marcus. "I wish you had let it rest for a few days."

"Let what rest?" exclaimed Connor, with a sudden burst of feeling, "my boiling blood, and my throbbing brow? Marcus, you do not know me; you know not what love is. So near my happiness! and now, to see it torn from me.—She cannot have the heart to drive me from her—she cannot——" before he had concluded the sentence Flora returned. "Flora," he said, "I see it in your face; she *has* the heart to turn me out, without one word—one kind or sad good-bye—after——but never heed—never heed! Now by the bright skies and green fields of my country," he continued vehemently, as starting up he flung the chair from him, "I'll make her sorry for this before she's many hours older—by the great——"

But Flora would not let him speak; she placed her hand on his lips. "Hush, Connor; a little patience."

"It's you must hush," he said, as he broke from her; "the first man that talks to me of patience, I'll knock his brains out! Tell her, I say, she shall be heart-sorry for this, before

she's many hours older; and tell her so from me. But no—do not—she'll feel it time enough." And he rushed out of the room like a maniac.

"Poor Connor! when my sister takes anything in her head, she's very obstinate; she wouldn't hear me. I dare say he'll enlist—go for a soldier or a sailor. I couldn't have used him so," said Flora.

"Indeed," observed the gentle Marcus, "you use me worse."

"You, indeed! *You* are proud, Marcus; but your's is an Irish pride—a pride compared to which humility is a rich privilege and a rare gift."

"Well, if it is, Flora, pride is almost the only thing we have left us. Listen to me—if Connor enlists, I'll do the same. I'm tired of this dawdling life. Had I been rich and independent, you would not have trifled with or have tortured me as you have done; were I to go abroad, you might sometimes think of me with kindness, if not with love. You accuse——"

"Stop," said Flora, "I never accused you of anything, goodman Marcus, except,—the cardinal virtues,—your gentleness, patience, and long-suffering have been a perpetual reproach to poor giddy-pated Flora. You have been a

sort of pattern-man to fit all sorts of proprieties on, and I have tried to spoil you. I should like you so much better, if you had a good spice of Old Nick in your composition. I think a red coat would do it—you would look so handsome in regimentals !"

"Ah !" said her lover, and an expression of sadness became his handsome face, "you would like me to leave you, then ?"

"Oh, no !—Now keep your distance, as the raven said to the crow when he called her step-sister," laughed the girl; "I should break my heart for somebody to torment. To be sure, Margaret has just bought a donkey for Hector, and that would do *almost* as well—*better* — because the creature would kick, and——"

"I don't ?" added the youth.

"Exactly," she said.

Marcus resolved to pluck up a spirit, and replied, "Still, let me tell you, I'll not be made a fool of, solely for your amusement. There are many pretty girls in the village would be delighted to have me. It's absurd to see two such fine fellows as O'Gorman and myself, subject to the caprice and whims of two English gipsies, who think to carry everything before them. Dame Margaret, by the weight of gra-

vity, and *you*, by the brightness of brass," Flora rubbed her eyes, she thought Marcus must be bewitched, she had never seen him thus chafed before; he walked up and down the room with a firm step, and he looked what he was, displeased, hurt, mortified both for himself and his friend. "If Margaret Lee chooses to cast off a man because he has accidentally taken poison, I call her unjust; and if Flora Russel delights in perpetually annoying, in season and out of season, a man who has devoted many of the best hours of his life——"

"Well, sir," interrupted Flora, tearing the border of her best apron into literal shreds, "well, sir; nobody asked you, I am sure."

"Peace, Flora, and hear me," he said sternly; "peace, and hear me; if you do not change, it may be the *last time*."

"Oh, very well, sir—very well, sir," she exclaimed, convulsively. "So much the better, to have been so long pestered with a fool!"

"You cannot look at me, Flora," he answered gravely—"you cannot look at me, and call me that name again." Flora sank abashed in her chair, and he continued. "I said I had devoted the best hours of my life to your improvement—I have done more, I have devoted the germ, the strength of my affection to you; I have not

suffered my passion to obtain dominion over me, though the struggle has been a hard one, because I knew that if I did so, the altar would be, as it is with many of my country, only the high road to poverty. I have laboured and waited for that independence which will always secure my idol from want; if you could know how madly I love you, Flora, you might, perhaps understand the sacrifice; but you are only a giddy, thoughtless girl, without a heart—I tell you, without a heart."

"Well, I hear you," said Flora, tapping her feet rapidly on the carpet, astounded at Marcus's new-found energy, but too well pleased with the earnestness and depth of his affection to be very angry; "I hear you, sir—if I am without a heart—I don't suppose I was born without one—and I can answer for it, *you* have not got it:—good morning to you—why don't you go?" And to her utter astonishment, Marcus did go, which she by no means intended he should; and then she kept peeping through the window to see if he was coming back; and when he did not come back, she got very angry, and then she began to cry; and when she had cried a good many tears, she began to laugh—gentle reader, why did Flora laugh?—I will tell you, she conned over Marcus's speech, thus—

"He has devoted the best hours of his life to my improvement—well, now, if Marcus was a wise man, he would have devoted them to my amusement; the absurdity of supposing a woman could love a man, who kept humming and hawing over books from morning till night, —and yet, somehow, I don't know how I should feel, if he did *not* love me;—he said he had devoted the germ and strength of his affections to me,—well, I knew *that*—he could not help himself;" and Flora glanced at a small looking-glass, and the glance was so satisfactory, that she took a longer look, and began "settling her hair," and having twisted the ringlets to her satisfaction, she again peeped from the window, —but he came not; and then she flounced about the room, and at last paused and burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter, at what she called the dignity with which Marcus left the room; and when she had laughed until the tears almost came into her eyes, she looked up and saw her sister standing before her, her eyes red from weeping, her cheeks pale, her lips trembling. "You are very merry, Flora," she said, and the low, soft tone of her voice sounded like funereal music, when contrasted with the ringing joyfulness of the wild girl's merry laughter, "very; and I like to see you so, except when—it seems unfeeling. You know how my feelings have

been harrowed; you have parted unkindly with Marcus, yet you laugh."

"I could not help it, Margaret," she replied. "Somehow I try to keep solemnity—I would fain be very miserable—I labour hard to be unhappy, I do indeed; but somehow, trouble runs away from me, like water off a duck's back. I am downright dead with wretchedness for a minute or two, but my spirits get up, I don't know how, and such funny things come into my head, and my heart that seemed stuck to the pit of my stomach, springs bounding to my lips, and I cannot help laughing. I am very sorry, sister, that you are angry, but you were more severe to Connor than I have been to Marcus; however, both our lovers are gone, so we must either do without any, or get new ones—I think I should like a new one. I'd take to little Peter, only he 's so ugly—I hate an ugly man."

Flora paused in her levity, for she saw that Margaret was really ill, and in an instant she was sobered; for though her spirit was untameably wild, her heart was kind. Time and sorrow—real sorrow, would provide the only cures for Flora's wildness.

"I will go into the garden," said Margaret. "If what you told me up stairs about Connor be really true, why I almost think I have been too severe—and——"

"Indeed, sister, you had much better relent," interrupted the eager Flora; "he said you'd be heart-sorry for it, before you'd be many hours older, and I am sure he is right."

"Did he say so?" said Margaret proudly; "then, I am sure, I shall not offer reconciliation—'heart-sorry!'—that is presuming a good deal."

"There, now," exclaimed Flora, bursting into tears. "There, now, I have done wrong again!—O my tongue! my tongue!—what a deal of misery it does bring me into! I wish I were dead or dumb!"

"Always in extremes," sighed Margaret, as leaning on Flora she walked amid flowers glittering in the sunbeams.

There is a fashion in everything, and there has sprung up of late a fashion in flowers; the horticultural *fêtes* and shows are to our cottage floriculture what the Italian opera is to ballad music; no one can deny their splendour and utility, but I love best the humbler flowers; it is so difficult to become on friendly terms with exotics; they are fine to look at, and you would treat them with proper respect, but I could not place them in my bosom as I would an English rose, or a sprig of mignionette; the one we, or at least I, love, the other I admire.

When Connor quitted Margaret's cottage, he could hardly repress his feelings ; the daylight was hateful to him, and, in all the bitterness of a wounded spirit, he fancied every eye as he passed was filled with scorn ; he would not have entered a house for the world, but proceeded at a rapid pace towards the old castle, and having crossed the bridge

"Where no water flows,"

he pondered in his mind the fevered events of the past day, and felt that his years of love had been ill requited; he forgot in his own sufferings, the agony which Margaret must have undergone, and when he reverted to the Griffin his anger knew no bounds. At last he came to the resolution of compelling Margaret to see him, and was about to rise determining to see Marcus, when a noise amongst the bushes attracted his attention, and he caught a glimpse of a well-known scarlet petticoat, which at once roused him. By the time, however, he had clambered the rock, it had disappeared, and the Griffin would have got clear off—for she had no desire to encounter Connor in his present humour—had she not sneezed ; the noise led Connor to the spot, where squatted, like a hare

in its form, between two rocks in a natural dell, was Mabel Griffin; she had left Ulick, intending to "reconitre, as the Frinch says," but would have gone far to avoid Connor. When she saw she was discovered, for O'Gorman hung over her hiding-place with the eye of a lynx—she composed her features into their expression of humility and pain.

"You'll lend me a hand, Misther Connor dear, won't you, to pull me out of this hole,—O my!—My foot slipt, you see, with the wakeness of my back, and I hunting for the sweet tansey to make a drink for myself, on account of the many diseases the poor flesh is bothered wid; I was going afther you as soon as I had done, for I knew you'd be wanting to see me; the pride of the counthry you are, Misther Connor dear,—the pride, joy, and glory."

"You traitorous old hag!" exclaimed Connor, shaking his hand at her.

"What is it, dear?" replied the Griffin, creeping out on her hands and knees; "I'm grown rather hard of hearing with the rheumatics in my head."

"You are an old mischief-making Jezebel!" shouted Connor.

"Now, dear," she said, standing erect before him, and looking as innocent as possible, "now,

dear, who said that of poor Mabel Griffin, for ould, and deaf, and miserable, and altogether as I am,—still whosoever said that of me, I'll be revenged of them, that's all that's in it."

"I said it, and say it," replied Connor; "you put the drink on me yesterday—you represented to Mrs. Lee that I got tipsy on whiskey and *then* quarrelled—you—but why should I speak to you? you never had heart or feeling like another woman—never."

"Did I turn ould Monica out?—did I bid you sup every drop of the corjial I intinded for the poor ould thing; but you couldn't keep from it, you poor wake-headed—wake-hearted craythur; you could not keep from it, or any other thing that took your fancy. It's myself feels pity for you, and I don't mind saying so to the counthry, *for you're a man without any bone.* O poor, poor Misther Connor, sir, my heart aches for you," and the hag held up her hands in a deprecating attitude.

"I wish you were a man," fiercely growled Connor, between his teeth, "and then I should know how to punish you."

"Thank the Almighty for all his marcy," she exclaimed, "though indeed, Masther Connor, if I knew the why and wherefore of the thing, it's little, ould as I am, I'd think of

giving you as good a hiding as if you war a brat of a boy. Now, do ye think it's afraid of you I'd be? O my grief,—afraid of you!" She placed her arms a-kimbo. "And now, Misther Connor O'Gorman, it's very thankful I'd be to you, to tell me the rason you have for turning on me like a snake, or a viper, or a toad, or anything of the kind you plase, Misther Connor; could I help it if a drop of comfort went to your head instead of your heart? could I catch a *hoult* of a stick that never whispered its intention to me to disfigure your beauty, you Cupid, you?"

"Mabel Griffin," interrupted Connor; "one word will serve for all. You made a fool of me —you turned and twisted what I did and what I said to a bad purpose; to make bitterness and mischief where, if you had the heart or feeling of a woman, you would have tried to make peace, and hide a fault; but for all your cleverness, for I know you're as clever as bad, —now, don't attempt to get up a story, don't, for I can bring you chapter and verse for everything I have said,—but with all your cleverness, you'll not make a fool of me a second time,— you've done your worst—you have, you cat-of-the-mountain,—and see, if I don't punish you,

you murdering, ugly sinner.—I'll expose you to your priest, Mrs. Griffin, and——"

But the Griffin did not permit Connor to finish his sentence. She saw that the eyes of her victim were opened, and, disappointed but not baffled, she resolved to storm where she could no longer mine.

"I'll take you to pieces, Misther Connor, as the tailor said when he unpickt the silk,—I'll take you to pieces, as the tailor said when he unpickt the silk, sir," she repeated. "As to making a fool of you—the thing they call Nature had done that little job for me, before I had the pleasure and honour of knowing a gintleman of your fine larning, and grand edication, and *saggesse,* as the Frinch says, and vartuous propensities;—you thought to put down the mountain dew, and never toss your little finger too high,—ah, ah,—don't you think you'd cut a fine figure in a ballad in that purty row at the sheebeen shop, ordering the fine English widdy's ould sweetheart off to execution in a bog-hole—you war jealous of the little Engleesher, and the widdy to say he was her cousin; the like of them cousins are convanient stock for a purty young widdy—mighty convanient! Hadn't Ulick O'Sullivan (for I don't care a thraneen for your good or bad word, I wanted to sow

the seed, let it grow as it might,) a fine laugh at ye!"

Connor, when he looked at the taunting fiend before him, could hardly command his actions, his temper he could not manage.

"I'll find some way of punishing you yet," he said, turning away.

"Stay here and do it, can't ye? Shall I tell how the widdy——"

"By all the holy saints," exclaimed Connor, "if you but breathe her name again, I'll——"

'You'll do what, Misther Connor, sir; what will you do?" she inquired, thrusting her face as close as possible to his,—"what will you do?"

What Connor would have done, cannot now be ascertained. The Griffin, it will be remembered, was greatly disliked by the entire neighbourhood, particularly by the children, who have a natural antipathy to envious and ill-natured persons; it so happened that three or four idle Blarney boys had been strolling about the Rock-close, and clambering the trees to the old and deserted birds' nests, from which they managed to abstract a small hat-full of addled eggs; attracted by the well-known tones of the Griffin's rasping voice, one of them, a little imp of the O'Gorman faction, crept along the arm of a tree

which overhung the spot where Connor and the Griffin stood, and with the dexterity of an accomplished marksman, dropped a handful of the eggs on her beflounced cap. Connor looked upwards, and just caught a glimpse of the rosy-faced delinquent, as he swung himself out of sight; there was something so ludicrous in the adventure, that Connor could not help laughing,—not so the Griffin; she foamed at the mouth with positive rage, and if O'Gorman had not retreated, she would have flown on him with the fury of an enraged tiger,—swearing all the time that it was a plan of his "to insult and murder her intirely;" it would be more than painful to repeat her words, but as Connor departed, she fell on her knees and swore a desperate oath, to be revenged on him, and on all he loved, before he was a week older.

THE GROVES OF BLARNEY.

PART VII.

Two days had passed since Midsummer Eve, and Connor had written to Margaret, who still appeared inflexible, though Marcus Roche, whose quarrel with Flora was made up on the evening of the morning it occurred, assured him she was coming round, and only holding out from a little bit of female obstinacy—of which Margaret Lee was by no means guiltless. Peter Swan, although she had no atom of respect for his opinion, encouraged her "firmness,"—his dignity had been insulted, and Margaret felt in one respect with him, that Connor was greatly wrong in having suffered him to be served as he had been; the sight of the black riband crossing Peter's forehead to conceal an unlucky scratch inflicted

by the branch of a tree, which Peter persisted in imputing to the violence of the *h*uncivilised, wild *H*irish, kept alive this irritated feeling, and, moreover, constant whispers were borne to her ear, which, though she thought she disregarded, nevertheless tended to keep Connor and her apart; the Griffin set as many reports afloat through the country as might have branded a hundred characters, and it is impossible to imagine the degree of discomfort and irritation such flying rumours produced at Margaret's cottage: the Irish are as fond of gossip, which may be called the under-current of scandal, as the English, and unfortunately have more time, and more imagination to display and embellish it. Now, these said walking repositories of evil, be they rich or poor, always affect to disbelieve their own statements—"they don't vouch for its truth, they only heard it;" and Margaret Lee's feelings and affections were perpetually at war with what she called very ostentatiously, as a woman always does, "her reason." Flora and Marcus were staunch to their friend's interests, and certainly, with all due respect to Mistress Margaret Lee, I should have considered Connor O'Gorman in the light of a victim rather than a sinner.

It was a touching sight to see old Monica, conducted by "a neighbour's child," falling at

Margaret's feet and entreating her, while tears rolled down her aged face, "not to let the love, liking, and spirit, Masther Connor showed to a poor, lone, desolate craythur like her, who had no one to look to her, no one to think of her—only God sent him like a sunbeam in the dark day of her throuble."..."If you don't make it up, Misthress Margaret, a-chora! it will send me a deal sooner to my grave." And it was no easy matter to get poor Monica out of the house, without Margaret's direct promise that she would make it up; Flora was obliged to manage her dismissal, as she was everything of the kind, where management was necessary.

It was a day sufficiently hot and sufficiently suffocating to have belonged to an English, not an Irish June, and Margaret was seated at her work in her little parlour, her cousin poring over his papers at a separate table, which he had managed to litter and make as untidy as possible.* Flora was winding cotton, and

* I hope the reproach of slovenliness is passing away from literature, or rather I should say, from its professors. A well-organised mind cannot fail of being orderly in all things, and a mind that is not well organised can rarely inform, or even amuse, except by its absurdities. I never could fancy why a gentleman

Hector, fatigued less by heat than play, was more than half asleep on the carpet.

"Cousin Margaret," said Peter Swan, who Flora observed was very anxious to appear both clever and interesting at the same time, which if he had any knowledge of human nature, he would have felt was utterly impossible, for we never like the cleverness which penetrates our little weaknesses; "Cousin Margaret, you would be astonished to perceive how well my book gets on; the fact is, that few tourists have had the practical knowledge of the *H*irish character, that I have had."

"A cracked skull, and a scratched nose, to wit," said Flora.

"Be quiet," said Margaret.

"Really, Flora, one would think you were

wrote best unshaven and in slippers, or how a lady improved her genius by neglecting that neatness of attire which is the outward and visible sign of a well-regulated mind and a comfortable home. I would earnestly entreat the young of my own sex, who possess, or imagine they are possessed of, literary talent, carefully to avoid contracting slovenly, or even peculiar habits. Sir Walter Scott, (blessings and honour to his name for ever!) set a glorious example of simplicity and propriety in all things, that we ought to follow in gratitude and humility.

*H*irish, you are so funny," replied Peter, who certainly was very good-tempered.

"What part of your life and adventures have you been writing to-day,—is it the *h*antiquities, as you call them?" persisted the incorrigible Flora. Margaret cast a reproving glance at her sister, but Peter's ear was not sufficiently quick to notice the burlesque.

"No, Mr. Cut told me not to mind them, as they could be put together in London. You know there are no new *h*antiquities, and it's as easy as print to get them out of the old tours. Marcus is to give me a chapter, which will be a feature, and Mr. Shuffle (whose brother is clever in that way) will dove-tail the new and the old, until they agree quite as well as——"

"Protestant and Catholic!" interrupted Flora.

"Better, I hope," said Peter gravely, "or they would not agree at all; and much as you undervalue my abilities, Flora, I assure you I have already made a list of thirteen new stories, anecdotes—all curious—here they are. No. 1. The Kilkenny Cats, that eat each other to the tails; No. 2. The Bit of a Box; No. 3. the Last of the Sarpints; No. 4. How to make Limestone Soup; No. 5. Castle walls papered with velvet; No. 6.——"

"Stop, stop," exclaimed Flora; "why all those stories are as well known as the rock of Cashel."

"And how is the rock of Cashel known?"

Flora laughed.

"I assure you, Flora," continued the traveller, "the rock of Cashel is not at all known in England."

"I believe you, sincerely," said Margaret. "It is very sad for poor Ireland, that those in general who write about her, see only one side of the picture; they come over here with preconceived ideas."

"I assure you, cousin," said Peter, with admirable simplicity, "I had no preconceived ideas."

"I firmly believe *that*," returned Flora, with mock gravity.

"I thank you, Flora," said the little man, "that is nearly the first civil thing you have said to me since my arrival."

"Well, then, dear coz," she replied, despite of Margaret's admonitory looks, "well, then, dear coz, I assure you, it will not be the last. Are the booksellers who sent you on your travels very great booksellers? Do they publish a great many books, and is your name to be printed on the title page—by Peter Swan, Esq.?"

"No, no," replied Peter, struggling between a natural love of truth and an acquired taste for display. "No, a gentleman—a great man, is to what is called *edit* the book; and then many persons think it is *his*."

"And many don't think about it at all, after my way," said Flora. "And the great man, as you call him, puts his great name to your little-great nonsense, and that would be something, I fancy, like——"

"Flora, Flora!" exclaimed Margaret.

"Well, I can't help it—like harnessing our great horse to Hector's wheelbarrow, and then every one would think something was coming; but Peter, cousin Peter, won't they be disappointed, when they see—only the little barrow?"

"Flora, you hurt people's feelings," said Margaret.

"Dear little cousin, do I hurt your feelings?" she asked. "I am very sorry, cousin Peter, and I won't do so any more."

Peter Swan looked at his giddy coz for a moment, and then with a blending of good-temper and unintentional burlesque that was very ludicrous, he observed, "Well, Flora, it will be by the opinion of the public that I stand or fall: perhaps when you see my book praised in an English newspaper——"

"Psha," laughed the incorrigible girl, "yesterday I read in an English newspaper, that somebody's jet blacking was the pride of mankind."

"Well," said the traveller, a most extraordinary light breaking in upon him, exemplified by a desire to tease his cousin; "well, I quite agree with Margaret, that she has had a lucky escape from this O'Gorman, he is an an *h*uncivilized, *h*unnatural, wild *H*irish monster; who, as I have here written, is a genuine specimen of the race *homo*, with the wings just cut; one degree and a quarter, (I like to be correct,) one degree and a quarter removed from positive cannibalism."

"How dare you put such stuff into your foolish book?" exclaimed Margaret; "after this fashion is the country injured and insulted. Petty scribblers make a month's visit, scrawl, and then print their nonsense! Harry O'Gorman is a brave, warm-hearted, generous fellow! And the more I think over the affair——"

"Hilly, oh, O!" said Peter.

"Bravo!" said the delighted Flora; "go on—now you've struck the right key, and will give us a sweet melody!"

Margaret looked confused, and inquired what she had said.

"Say," repeated Flora, in her ecstasy tangling the cotton; "say—why you know you have been thinking of HIM all the day; —when you called the cat to his milk this morning, instead of saying Tom, you said Connor."

"My dear Flora, will you hold your tongue? you know that Hector has played in the sun until he is quite exhausted, and yet you chatter away."

"You never reproved my chattering till now; but I won't suffer my tongue to be balked of its duty-exercise by that sleepy-headed urchin," she continued, taking him tenderly in her arms, while his beautiful head rested on her bosom, and he still slept on, the soft warm sleep of infancy, as if he had not been removed. "I will put him on my bed in that little room; (Flora's sleeping-room communicated with the parlour;) here, mammy, take off his shoes." Margaret untied the shoes, and stood up to take the silk kerchief she had worn herself off her neck, to cover his eyes—the kerchief was remarkable in pattern—a white silk, with an embroidered border of green shamrocks—Connor had given it to her.

"I'll put him on the bed myself," said the tender mother, as she took him to her own bosom; "and while I am gone, you can sing to

Peter the 'Perilous Blarney;' it will do, you know, as an *original* song for the English, being as yet, only known in Ireland;" and she left the room with her sleeping boy.

Flora sung—

"Oh, when a young bachelor woos a young maid,
Who's eager to go, and yet willing to stay—
She sighs, and she blushes, and looks half afraid,
But loses no word that her Lover can say.
What is it she hears but the blarney—
The blarney—the blarney—
O, a perilous thing is the Blarney!

"To all that he tells her she gives no reply,
Or murmurs and whispers, so gentle and low—
And though he has ask'd her when nobody's by,
She dare not say 'yes'—and she cannot say 'no,'
She knows what she hears is the blarney—
The blarney—the blarney—
O, a perilous thing is the Blarney!

"But people get used to a perilous thing,
And fancy the sweet words of lovers are true—
So let all their blarney be passed through a ring—
The charm will prevent all the ill it can do;
And maids have no fear of the blarney—
The blarney—the blarney—
Or the peril that lies in the Blarney."

Margaret returned to the room on tip-toe, her finger resting on her lips as she looked

back towards the bed, upon which she had placed her child.

"O Flora!" she said, in a low whispering voice, "do look at him, he is so lovely!"

"Bother the brat!" exclaimed Flora, who, notwithstanding her sauciness, loved the child with the warmest affection. "Bother the brat! he is the cause of a great deal of trouble."

"Now you are unjust," replied Margaret, resuming her seat; "very unjust—he never gives you trouble!"

"Will your honours help a poor sailor that's ould, and worn, and starvin'?" inquired a feeble voice at the open window.

"Well," exclaimed Peter, "there's no end to the beggars in this country, nor no place secure from their intrusion. Such a vagabond as that ought to be sent to the workhouse!"

"Help a poor sailor!" repeated the same whining voice.

"What have you got rolled up in your blanket at your back?" inquired Flora.

"A little cask of holy wather it is, Miss Beauty-bright, that I filled at the holy well of Gougane Barra with my own two hands, and am carrying through the counthry to turn an honest penny by, and help the lone, desolate craythurs that can't get so far for it themselves."

"O indeed!" said Flora, "holy water out of the River Lee, I dare say; if you have been to Gougane Barra this midsummer, poor man, what need can you have for the green shade over your eyes?"

"Ah, Miss Beauty! it was a flash of lightning did that mischief to me in the Bay of Biscay; and the waters of the holy well are only good for land blindness. I've enough sight left to see your purty face, miss—praise be to God!"

Flora rose, laughed, and gave the old sailor a penny, who then began to beg for some food; for an Irish beggar seldom gets one thing that he does not immediately ask for another; and Margaret herself walked out of the room, under the rustic verandah, paused as she passed the window of the chamber where her child was sleeping, looked in on him, and then with her own hand gave the traveller both bread and meat, telling him, that as he appeared fatigued, he might, if he pleased, sit down and eat it where he could be shaded from the sun's rays. The place she so kindly pointed out, was between the two windows. She then returned to her work, and Peter declaimed long and loudly, as people who know nothing of the starving condition of the Irish poor are apt to

do, against the impropriety of encouraging paupers, until Flora, wearied with his stupidity, (and what is so abominable as a man talking nonsense in the morning?) took from her workbox a will which poor Monica's son had made previous to his transportation, and which she had kept, she said, as a *national* curiosity.

Marcus had written it according to the man's own dictation, and as I have never seen Mr. Peter Swan's book—which, possibly, may never have been published—I venture to insert this curious document of Irish ingenuity, showing how much a man can leave who has nothing to leave,—adding only that Flora read it with an admirable brogue.

"I, Jemmy Murphy, being sound both of wind and limb, as well as body and mind—though, faith, it's like an empty nut I am—do give and bequeath as follows:—To Ulick O'Sullivan, and all his seed, breed, and generation, I lave bad luck—a thing they had ever and always, when Misther Connor O'Gorman, or any of the heads of his faction, were to the fore,—to say nothing of myself, who always tickled them nately, by day or night, and will again, if ever it's my fortune to return, afther my travels, to this blessed and beautiful country. To my cousin, Darby Murphy, commonly

called Darby the bone-setter, by rason of the handy turn he had with the shillala, I lave my black-thorn, which he will find up our chimney, where I kept it these six months seasoning; and my darlint mother knows I buttered it with hog's-lard every morning of my life, as soon as I said my prayers, which kept me from every sort and kind of temptation, barring the bit of a hunt afther the guager, for which I'm a murdered man intirely—for they might as well send me out of the counthry for hunting a fox or a badger—but that has nothing to do with my Will."

"Stop for a moment, Flora," said Margaret, "and just see if the sailor has finished, and left the plate."

"Yes," replied Flora, after doing as her sister desired, "he is gone, and left some bread and potatoes on the dish. How very strange! and never to say thank you."

"Pray go on, Miss Flora," said Peter; "it is particularly interesting."

"The bit of a farm I lave to my poor mother—that is, if the landlord will lave it with her, which he need not do, unless he likes, for I forgot to get the lase signed; and if the neighbours help her to plough it, and plant it, and give it plenty of good manure, I'll go bail

afther a year or two she'll be able to pay the rint, and that's more than ever I could, out of it."

"Well," said Peter, "that is a very extraordinary fact; how hard for a landlord not to be able to get his rent!"

"Very," said Margaret; "only equalled by the hardship of a tenant's being unable to pay it!"

"Listen," exclaimed Flora, "and don't interrupt me,—you are very rude."

"My father's wig—it never fitted me, in rason that the many thumps my father got altered the shape of his head so much, that his own mother—(rest her soul!)—and she, feeling it all over—used to say, 'My darling son, this is not the head you were born with;' he lived to be three-score and ten, and hadn't a *grey* hair in his head—they were all *white!* I lave it to the man that swore against me, *with my curse*, that he may feel more trouble and blackness under it than ever he brought on me."

"What a revengeful dog!" said the cockney; "I am glad he is out of the country!"

"The bacon I lave to my mother, not that there's as much of it left as would fit in the hollow of a bee's fist; there's Paddy Mahoney's mo-

ther, I'd lave her the pratee-pit, only there's no pratees in it; and I'd lave my mother the turf-rick, only it's burnt—any how, put it down, it's a token of my love and goodwill to my poor mother, which, indeed, I'd be a thief to forget; I'll lave her the big potato-pot, my grandmother, rest her bones! bought at the old squire's cant; and the cup and two saucers that Jerry Donovan took a bite out of to sharpen his teeth—and the beautiful bottle without a neck—and the three-legged stool they burnt the two legs out of—and the taypot that Judy Nale knocked the handle off of, and sent the cover into smithereens—all these I lave to my mother. I lave the horse and car to my brother's widow—faith the horse is dead, but the car's below in the ditch—one of the wheels in the mud, the other striving to keep the pig in the sty; and that same pig I lave to Jerry Dacey—she's to the fore, anyhow, *in the squire's pound!*"

"I beg your pardon," said Peter, "but what's the meaning of 'to the fore?'"

"On the spot—to be got at," replied Flora.

"And what does he mean by buying at a cant?"

"O," she said, "a cant is an auction."

"An *h*auction," repeated the cockney; "dear

me, it would be an *h*act of benevolence to teach these poor creatures English."

Flora laughed maliciously, and continued—

"I have a great deal of respect for Mrs. Margaret Lee, and I lave her my gratitude for all the good advice she gave me, which, if I had the sense to follow, I wouldn't be troubling the government now, as I have been doing, against my will—for it's not *trouble of that kind I'd like to be giving them.* To my poor little niece I lave the forty acres on the top of Hungary Mountain, that were my great grandfather's own, and where there's plenty of hares, but only one heir-at-law—and that's myself; the lives in the lase must drop one time or other, and when they do, why in law and raison the property is mine; so the poor little thing will be an heiress, maybe, if she lives long enough."

Flora's reading was interrupted by the sudden entrance of Aileen O'Sullivan, who came forward with more than ordinary wildness of look and gesture, to the no small terror of Peter Swan, who seemed to regard everything Irish as an object of terror. She did not speak to either Margaret or Flora, but murmuring a sort of tuneless music to herself, went round and

round the room, peering under the tables and chairs—looking behind the curtains—and then pausing to gaze on Margaret with a peculiarly mournful expression of countenance.

"This is the most ill-governed country on the face of the earth," said Peter, angry at the interruption; "nothing but beggars and mad women. Why don't you turn her out?"

"The little man in grey, and the little man in white,
That sings in the day, and trembles at night—
Poor man!"

sang the innocent; and attempted to smooth down Peter's hair—at which Peter was indignant. Suddenly she espied Hector's shoes, and running to them, eagerly snatched them up, looked at them, and then at Margaret.

"What a gentle, tender creature she is," said Margaret, who, like all mothers, was pleased that even her child's shoes should be taken notice of. It is very long since you came to see me, Aileen,—what will you take?"

"You have nothing to give Aileen," she replied, laying down the shoes, and gazing as earnestly as before at Margaret. "Poor bird! its nest is robbed—its nest is robbed."

"Poor thing," said Flora, "she misses

Hector. Hector is asleep, Aileen, will you wait till he wakes?"

"Where?" inquired Aileen.

"There, in that room," replied Margaret, pleased at her intelligence; "there—but hush, you must not waken him—he is tired."

Aileen proceeded on tip-toe to the door Margaret had pointed to, which was open; she just looked in, and then screaming one of her wildest screams, rushed into the garden by the way she had entered.

"Plague take her vagaries," exclaimed Margaret, pettishly, "that will waken the boy." And she ran herself to the entrance of the little chamber; but the scream she uttered was far more terrible than that of Aileen, as she called aloud, "Flora! he is not here. Gracious heaven! Run, Flora, he is in the garden, or in the paddock, or the stable, or—how very absurd it is of me to tremble thus. Look in your chamber, Peter—he is full of frolic as a mountain kid, and has hidden there to frighten me—I'm sure he has. Hector, my child! Flora," continued Margaret, as she sunk exhausted in a chair; "Flora, call him louder—my heart faints within me—the child could not hear my voice—it is so feeble; call him, dear Flora—loud, so that he may hear and come."

Flora called loud enough to rouse the farm servants who were at dinner, but none had seen Hector.

"I am sure," said Margaret, when she found that she could speak with some degree of calmness, though she trembled like an aspen, "I am sure he has concealed himself in play, and I shall find him cowering in a corner, his cheeks full of rosy joy, his eyes brighter than diamonds. Hector!" she called aloud, "Hector, you silly rogue!" but for the first time when she called her boy, there was no answer. Collecting her strength, she rushed from the room, to pursue the search herself; and in a few moments all her neighbours were aware of Hector's mysterious disappearance, and intent on his recovery.

"My dearest sister," said Flora, perfectly sobered, and not at all disposed to laugh, "you know he cannot be gone far—it is impossible—just think."

"I cannot think," replied Margaret, "I cannot think—I feel that my child is gone—but I cannot think—yet you said it was impossible—say it again, dear Flora, and I will bless you."

"It is impossible," repeated Flora.

"How coldly you say it," said the agonised mo-

ther—"how coldly you say it; his shoes are here, you know; he cannot go anywhere without his shoes. Oh, my heart is bursting, and you to say so coldly, that it was impossible!" And Margaret flew from the support of her sister's arm, to issue fresh orders and make new inquiries. Flora was terrified at her sister's vehemence; she could not understand it—it was so opposed to her usual calm and gentle bearing, that it terrified her. Much as she loved Hector, it was not yet given her to comprehend the absorbing interest, the depth, the anxiety of a fond mother's love for an only child. Evening came, yet brought no tidings of the boy. The wildness of Margaret's grief was settling into a calm deep agony, much more terrific than her bursts of feeling; the country was roused, every man, woman, and child, were on the alert; policemen were sent by Marcus Roche in all directions, and the strictest inquiries set on foot, as to what strangers had been seen in the immediate neighbourhood that morning.

Flora named the Griffin as a likely person to secret the boy from ill-nature; but the villagers were quite positive they had not seen her for two days, and she was too well known and too strictly noticed to pass unobserved through Blarney. Two or three lame sailors were known

to have been in the neighbourhood, one of whom had visited the Bee's Nest, but how could they carry away Hector? and, moreover, *why* should they do it?

Peter Swan passed from one ecstasy to another. During the whole of his peaceable life, he had never been so excited—he was a new man. First of all, the child's disappearance was a sudden fillip to his nerves; then the state in which he saw Margaret roused his sympathies; then a sort of virtuous indignation which the English always feel at the maladministration of the Irish laws, overpowered him, and the little fair-haired man would hardly have been recognised by any of his respectable city acquaintances, so active and energetic had he suddenly become. Flora said the Irish air had wound him up, and he certainly afforded the peasants of Blarney a great deal of amusement; they liked "the little gentleman" for being so anxious about the child, whom they all loved, but they were at a loss to know whether they should set him down as whole or half mad; he talked largely of Bow-street officers, and city police—of abduction,—or as he called it, *h*abduction,—of the dangerous state of the county, and the lord mayor—and to use the words of an old woman,—

" bothered the people intirely with a power, of what they took to be his great edication, but what they could not understand in no manner of ways, she supposed because of his larning." He annoyed the villagers too, very much, by telling them they had no business to interfere about the child, but to leave all to the " proper authorities," which when Flora heard, she flew into a passion and told him, that an Irishman always felt a proper authority in his heart for doing what was right, and did not need his (Peter's) interference, to give him that authority ; upon which Peter grew angry, and leaving Flora and Marcus in the parlour, proceeded to walk up and down the garden, which he found far more pleasant than listening to Flora's reproofs. It was impossible to tranquillise Margaret: she looked through the rooms, and in the same places, twenty times over for her child; all things that moved she fancied were his returning footsteps, and Flora was almost alarmed for her reason. Peter had continued his walk up and down the garden watching the moon and stars, and thinking how very different England was from Ireland, when suddenly he heard his name called by a voice which he knew proceeded from the Griffin; he looked and saw her on the other side of the

hedge, appearing more tall and gaunt than usual in the moonbeams.

"Come near me, Mr. Swan, sir, if you plase," she said, in what she intended to be a very insinuating tone of voice; "come near me, dear gintleman, if you plase, for it 's the hoarseness and shortness of breath I'm troubled with intirely—it's a grate trouble to me."

"I am quite near enough to you, my very good woman," said Peter, not at all liking to enter into conversation with a lady of Mrs. Griffin's very extraordinary habits, particularly by moonlight.

"Sure, dear Mr. Swan, sir, I want to spake asy, and if I'd go to whisper through the hedge the face would be torn off me with the blackberry-bushes; and bad as the ould face is, it's the one that must go down to the grave with me, sir."

"But what can you possibly have to say to me, Mrs. Griffins?"

"Griffin, if you plase, sir."

"Well, it's all the same, isn't it?"

"If you plase, sir. But what I want to talk to you about, sir, is the child, sir," she said in a low tone.

"What, Hector?" exclaimed Peter.

"Ay, the beauty!" she replied. "Only

jist put your foot on the root of the ash, and lind me the loan of your hand, and I'll pull you through asy enough ; and here's a sate for your honour, too, sir !"

Peter gave her his hand, and willy-nilly, she drew him through the hedge ; and lifting him with the greatest ease, seated him on the arm of a stunted oak, where his legs, unable to reach the ground, dangled in the air, while she placed her hand on his arm to prevent his falling. "Your feet will be out of the damp grass now, sir; and the Irish dew rots the leathers of English shoes."

"Ah!" muttered Peter, "I wonder what the old hag will say or do;" and his eagerness to hear tidings of the child did not prevent his placing his hand on his watch, and drawing the tails of his coat under his arm, to prevent his pockets being picked.

"Now, Misther Swan, sir, I'm a pathriot—a pure Irish pathriot—and I can't bear the idea, sir, of your going out of the counthry with an oppression on your mind, sir, that we are *mauvais soojets*, as the Frinch says; it was one man that stole Hector Lee from his mother, and it would be a sin and a shame that in the mind of a gintleman of sense and larning like yourself, sir, the whole coun-

thry should lie under a reproach and a thunder-cloud, for the sake of one man's spite and treachery. Don't, my dear little gintleman, be trying to touch the earth with your toes, it'il only give you cold, dear; sit asy, sir, if you plase."

"Well—but who took the child?" said Peter.

"That's tellings!" replied the Griffin, laying her finger along her nose; "but can't you guess—*who* has a quarrel with the purty widdy? Who trated her relation, not with respect, but a ducking? Who——"

"Why you don't mean to say Connor stole Hector Lee?"

"You first ax him," said the Griffin significantly.

"I'd rather not," replied Peter drily.

"Well, if you're shy that way—sit asy, will ye—how you do kick the tree, dear—put this and this together—Connor shows the clovenfut too soon. Connor's refused; Connor made no secret of threat'ning revinge; the widdy won't come to—Connor, I don't say he stole the child—but an O'Gorman was at the cottage this morning done up as a sailor,—I know two boys as can swear it."

"The strongest circumstantial evidence I ever heard," said Peter. "Where are your wit-

nesses? They must make their depositions immediately before a magistrate. I wish you'd take me down."

"Not yet, sir dear. Depositions before a magistrate, is it? O my law! It's little you know about Ireland, sir. Depositions before a magistrate—sure they wouldn't be alive twelve hours after."

"You don't mean that?" said Peter.

"I do, sir. Oh the sweet purty widdy had a lucky escape, sir, she had; and the poor child as the vagabone carried it off—they say he cried murder! not, I'm sure, that he'll harrum the boy, not yet—*pas appresent*, as the Frinch says, any way—but he'll set him a one side, and thin—now mark my words, Mr. Swan, sir——"

"I do," replied Peter earnestly.

"And when the hullabaloo, and the ullagawn is quite riz—now mind and obsarve me—he'll step forward thin as grand as the binch of bishops, and offer (the black-hearted thraitor!) to find the child, and tell a hogmagany——"

"What?" interrogated Peter.

"Why a blathurrum of a tale about love and misery; and thin trump up a story, and say where he found it; may be, put the blame on some innocent boy's head, and thin come over the poor wake craythur that way—

the way you gintlemen all wheedle poor innocent women. Would you take a drop?"

"No thank you," said Peter; "but, Mrs. Griffins, you must come forward; I'll get the police to take this man immediately into custody—I never liked him, I confess, though——"

"Ah! Mr. Peter, you'd a lucky escape of the bog-hole; he was not so gone but he knew what he was afther; he wanted you out of the way—he was affeared of your penetration."

"Very likely," said Peter, appropriating the compliment at once.

"They'll not hear of it within at all; Mr. Roche and all, are so wrapt up intirely in him; but take your own course, Mr. Peter, gather the Peelers yourself, *on the sly*, and go slap bang to the house at onct, and *you may find something of the boy there*—let nothing escape you."

"But the witnesses—I must get at the men—it will fall to the ground unless we can bring the witnesses who saw him."

"Not at all, my dear; why should the poor boys be murdered? Witnesses are always murdered in Ireland, and they're never wanted—secret information does as well."

"But you said, I think, Connor O'Gorman took the boy?"

" One of his faction did, dear, at first, and then he was given over to Connor himself. Observe the desate of him, dear. When you bring the Peelers on him, do it all yourself, Mr. Swan, because you have the wisdom, and you'll see how glib he'll offer to find the child himself,—but take no comrades."

" Well, help me down now, my good woman; and then, late as it is, we'll get the police, and be off to Connor's house."

" Not me neither, misther Peter; I'd not be left alive an hour with them O'Gormans. Sure you wouldn't have me murdered for the good heart I have to your cousin. O my! Sure you'll——"

At this moment the garden-door opened, and Marcus Roche came out, calling Peter.

" Take me down, will you?" said Peter.

" O murder, intirely, there's black Marcus; O I must run. Shut you face, dear, and let yourself down by your hands; and mind the gripe of the ditch this side, and the bee-hives on t'other," and in an instant the Griffin was gone.

Peter, in haste to descend, fell into what in Ireland is called the "gripe," to avoid the bee-hive. Marcus could hardly forbear laughing at the droll figure that presented

itself to his inquiries, and could hardly believe it was the neat, nice, dapper Peter Swan, who had displayed himself all the morning in white trowsers and waistcoat. Peter had made up his mind not to let any one know his purpose, and Flora was so astonished at his dignity and mystery, that at any other time she would have tormented him to death.

Peter could not avoid altogether showing how much he knew; he assured Margaret he had got a clue by which he believed he should recover her child; he begged to decline stating who had bestowed it upon him, but he felt assured the child was not so far off as they imagined; and between his desire to show off, and his antipathy to Connor, in a few moments Margaret perceived that he suspected her lover of so foul an act—a supposition she would have spurned on the instant, if Flora had not unfortunately said, she remembered he threatened to be revenged. Farther, Peter refused to say; insisting that he himself would go to the magistrate, and to him and him only, confide the entire information he possessed. Margaret wept and prayed that he would tell her all; but, no, he was inflexible; he bade her hope the best, and while Flora blessed him for an errant fool, he put on his little great-coat,

and accompanied by Marcus, whom he assured he should only want as a guide, he set out with importance and his gold-headed cane, to the nearest police station.

Margaret, as soon as Peter was gone, called Flora, and told her she could bear the suspense no longer, but had resolved to go herself to Connor O'Gorman, and tax him with the crime. "I cannot believe him guilty, Flora, but I must go." And the two sisters set off immediately together.

When they arrived at Connor's farm, the door was open, and as they entered, Margaret was but coldly greeted by Alice.

"Is Connor at home?" inquired Flora.

"He is in the parlour," she replied.

And Margaret rushed in without speaking. When she saw Connor, she could not utter a word; she stood before him, one hand grasping her throat, while she pressed the other on her heart.

"Margaret!" he exclaimed, "what's this?"

"Give me," she said, "something to drink —water!"

Alice brought her a glass of water, but unfortunately the glass smelt of spirits. Margaret pushed it from her, and looking upbraidingly at Connor, said, "I asked for water—not poison!"

Connor replied, in a voice that brought tears into Flora's eyes, " I have not broken fast with meat or drink since yesterday."

" That he hasn't," said Alice, " and I'd as soon see him in his grave as the way he's going on now. His heart's broke, and that's the truth."

After a pause, Margaret spoke, though her voice was hoarse. " There—I am better now —now I can speak ; I ask you, Connor O'Gorman, where you have put my child ?"

" Me put your child !" inquired Connor; " why should I put him anywhere ?"

" Man, do not trifle with me," she exclaimed, " give me back my child. O ! the last hour's agony has more than revenged whate'er I made you suffer. Where have you concealed my boy ?"

" I swear by all the powers of heaven and earth, Margaret, I know nothing of the child," he replied ; " what do you mean ?—the last time I saw him was at your own door."

" They say you stole him," said the poor mother, bursting into tears ; " if so, you must have taken him while he slept. The child loved you, Connor ; if you have harmed him, I'll kneel and curse you with the full curses of a bereaved mother's heart,—but, O, you could

not—you have only borne him away to punish *me*. Your end is answered. Give him to me now."

Connor could bear this no longer, and stamping on the ground, he said, "Who dares to say I touched the darlint—he was as the core of my own heart. Alice? d'ye hear this? here's foul slander. Tell me this plain and straight—is the child gone?"

"Yes! O yes!" said Margaret.

"Then by the blessed sun! I swear not to break fast till he is found!" he exclaimed, throwing himself on his knees; "never, so help me, holy saints! will I lay upon a bed or close my eyes in sleep, till I give Hector Lee into his mother's arms. But how is this, Margaret—Flora?" he added, rising; "gone all day, you say, and me not know; was that a fair way to trate me? and Marcus to join in it. O such friends! such friends! A curse upon those who hinder a man from showing before the whole world what his heart is. Alice and I have been like two sick birds in a lone bush—neither able to sing to the other; and the farm-boys so busy with the fence, that none have been to Blarney, or I'd have heard it. Stir, Alice—stir the O'Gorman blood in your veins—down with you to the boys, that are below

by the mill-stream; bid them call every one of the name, or friendly to it, through the country —tell what has happened—let them search hill and dale, bog and mountain, lake and river."

"No, no!" exclaimed the bereaved mother; "no need to search for him in the river; he could not, must not, have perished."

"Margaret, darlint!" said Connor, "Margaret, you are right, he could not have perished —he could not have gone that way; there's a God and a bright sun in heaven,—keep up, Margaret, for the sake of—your child! I'll never see your face again till I have found him. Look! you can see from this window how poor Alice flies down the hill to where the labourers are at work. She has told them—there is no delay—five strong, brave boys, as ever turned the sod; how quick they take it."

Connor opened the window and waved his hand; his men returned the salute with a loud "Hooroo!" which affected Margaret like a shock of electricity; and now he continued, turning to Flora, "Who dared to say Connor O'Gorman was guilty of such mean wickedness? Tell me, Margaret—I see you don't believe it now—I see your heart has cleared me—tell me!"

"Her heart clear you," interrupted Flora;

" it's more than the law will; you know what you said to me—about revenge."

" I know I said I'd be revenged—that she'd be bitter sorry,—I bid you tell her so; and did *you*, too, take black maning out of such innocent words? I intended to leave the country, and was breaking my sister's heart with the resolve."

" My heart clears you of it; I could not see you thus, and for a moment believe that you would wrong me," replied Margaret.

" Some one has had speech with Peter Swan," said Flora.

" The Griffin, I am sure," said Connor; " it could be none else—that is, if you mean to say, that Peter Swan dared to lay such wickedness upon me; he may owe me a spite, but he's too weak-hearted to be so bitter bad,—he could not make up such a story out of his own head,—no one but her could invent it. Keep up *your* heart, sweet jewel!—never doubt I'll find the boy! I'll meet the men below, and will not seek to see your face again till I bring back your child."

Connor was rushing out, when Alice met him at the door.

" Stay!" she exclaimed; " here is Peter Swan, with ever so many Peelers."

"I do not want their help," said Connor; "I can do without them. I'll go—"

"No, you won't," said Peter, entering abruptly, and presenting a musket so awkwardly that Flora screamed. "Policemen!" he said, "do your duty. I identify that man as Connor Ogreman!"

"You!" exclaimed Connor; "my name's O'Gorman, and I have told you so before—Peter—Goose!"

"Policemen, do your duty!" vociferated Peter, greatly excited by the arduous duty he had undertaken to perform. "Deserted as I was in a strange country," he continued; "left by Mr. Roche at a critical moment—turned adrift upon my own resources, which are considerable, I have been able, not only to collect a sufficient force to capture the destroyer of your domestic peace, cousin Margaret, but I caught the Griffin, and forced her to produce her witness, a respectable, bright haired man, Mr. Thomas Staff—for I hold it inconsistent with the open and noble spirit of English law to receive secret information. Seize him!"

"The Griffin and Tom Staff—is it?" exclaimed Connor; "O, I understand you now; but time is passing, every minute's worth an

hour; I must go. Margaret, bear up, I will find your boy."

"I told you he would say that," exclaimed Peter to the policemen; "why don't you perform your warrant?"

"I desire you to let me pass; if you detain me, let it be on your own peril."

"Mr. O'Gorman," replied Peter, "you are an *h*ignorant *H*irishman."

"Mr. Swan," he answered, "that's very like the crow abusing the raven for having a black wing; you know I have only to whistle, and my own boys would knock you to smithereens in the twinkling of a sunbeam, but all I want is, to pass quietly,—what right have you to stop me?"

"Sir," said the police sergeant, "we shall be compelled to perform our duty, and I hope you will put no impediment in the law's path; we are bound to take you into custody, as this gentleman says."

Connor O'Gorman had never rendered himself remarkable for breaking laws, and yet there was something in the expression of his countenance which intimidated the police. Margaret, Flora, and Alice grouped together like a parcel of frightened sheep; Alice crying as if her heart would break, Margaret pale and breath-

less from anxiety, and Flora half crying, half laughing at the appearance her little cousin presented as he leaned upon his musket; the policemen did not seem to know how to act, and Peter's absurdity cast an air of ridicule over their proceedings, which they did not at all relish. Connor did not wish to resist the laws, but he felt that he must away and at once, and he made an effort to talk Peter over, which, however, was unsuccessful.

"You are not angry with me still, are you, about the ducking? I saw you had been drinking whiskey, and thought a little water with it would make it more agreeable; you could not be angry with me, Peter Swan,—help me off, just this onct, you shall have the merit."

"That's what you call blarney, I suppose," interrupted the cockney, "but no; peace-*hof*-ficers, do your duty."

"I tell you, man, if you be a man," said Connor, indignantly, "that I had no more to do with the villainy than the child's own mother, and can't understand it yet; but let me pass, I say,—I tell you I have sworn to find the child."

"Cousin, I feel that he is innocent," said the almost fainting Margaret, "for my sake, let him pass."

But Peter very civilly insinuated that women

never did understand anything about law; that he should do no such thing as let the culprit off, who must immediately go before a magistrate. It was evident to poor Margaret, whom Connor's confidence had inspired with new hopes, that Peter had forgotten all about her anxieties in the desire to display his power and sagacity to the astonished natives; he was almost beside himself with importance, and he concluded some absurd observations by declaring, in a most chivalrous manner, his determination to stand up for the "lone widow who had no friends." This roused Connor, and some stormy words followed that might have led to violence, had not Margaret burst forth,

"You men, stand there talking words—nothing but words, without heart or feeling—nothing but words,—when I, a mother, who have lost my all, am forced to listen to an idle cabal, while you, *men*, should have been scouring the country in all directions. O, you have no hearts! you have no hearts!—You have no children, or if you have, God has not taken them from you!—You have no hearts!"—and she sobbed bitterly on Flora's shoulders.

Connor looked at the door, and Peter thinking he meditated escape through it, exclaimed,

"Guard the door, till the reinforcement comes up, and then we'll cage him."

"O, ho," thought Connor, "there is a reinforcement expected, is there?" "Flora," he said aloud, "don't you see your sister is quite overcome with heat? open the window to the full, and place her near it there at the side."

Flora did as she was desired. There was a small narrow table under the window, but Connor still continued to look at the door, close to which the man stood; while Peter continued watching Connor, who addressed him, "Peter Swan, in the face of heaven I declare I am as innocent of the base crime you accuse me of, as the babe unborn; let me pass from that door, and I'll take any oath you please to resign myself into your hands, dead or alive, in six hours. Boys, Irishmen! give me six hours to seek that woman's child—her child whom you knew and liked—give me the six hours, and I'll give you leave to cut my throat, if I don't come back!"

"O you blunderer!" exclaimed Peter, who had edged round close to where Margaret was seated.

"Ah!" said Connor, contemptuously, "an Irishman's blunders are of the head, not of the

heart. A fig for your reinforcement," he added, making a feint, as though he would bolt through the door, upon which the men stuck more closely to it; "that for your reinforcement, although I see it turning the copse," and he pointed out of the window though still facing the door. Peter immediately stretched himself over the table to look in the direction which Connor pointed out, so that his body formed an inclined plane from the floor to the window; swift as an arrow from a bow, Connor sprang over him, and out of the window, to the astonishment of the police, and the discomfiture of Peter, who was regularly upset by an action so rapid and so unlooked for; the police then raised their fire-arms, but Margaret threw herself before them; while Flora, delighted beyond measure, huzzaed, to the deep mortification of her cousin Peter Swan. When they got outside they saw Connor skimming the country in the distance on the back of his own noble horse, upon which he had sprung without bridle or saddle, trusting to the creature's knowledge of his voice and habits.

THE GROVES OF BLARNEY.

PART VIII.

Margaret Lee and Flora Russel had hardly returned wearied and exhausted to the Bee's Nest, when a visiter presented himself who was both unexpected and unwelcome; the visiter was Ulick O'Sullivan.

"I have heard," he said, "of the loss in your house; and though it's little reason I have to offer my services in seeking your child, yet, Margaret Lee, what trouble would I not take, what peril would I not brave, to bring to you a moment of the happiness you have withheld from me!"

Ulick spoke well and with feeling, but Margaret at once perceived he was not sober; and as the night was closing in, Marcus absent, and no man about the house, the discovery alarmed

her not a little: she resolved to be as firm and calm as the nature of her feelings, harassed and tortured as they had been, would permit.

"I thank you," she replied, "but our friends are spread over the country; if the child is on Ireland's ground he will be found. May God prevent my bitterest enemy from feeling what I have felt this day!"

"You always were an angel," he observed. And as Margaret looked at him stedfastly, she thought the expression of his countenance changed; his eye sank before hers.

"Ulick O'Sullivan," she said, "your visit is strange; have you then nothing to tell me; is it merely to say you would seek to find my child that you came here? One might suppose you would be led to do so, without thinking it necessary to tell me your intention."

"Margaret," he exclaimed passionately, "I would go to the world's end to serve you; but you have scorned me—turned back upon myself the love I bore you; you love one who has proved more unworthy than ever the slighted Ulick could have proved. Now, Margaret, I can only say, that if you will give me hope—mind, I say—IF——"

"What then?" inquired Margaret eagerly.

"Why, *if* you will give me hope, I think I

can find a clue that will enable you to regain your child."

Margaret looked at Ulick for a moment with a stedfast gaze, and again he quailed beneath it.

"And you, Ulick O'Sullivan, come here to me," she said; "me—a bereaved mother—with an *if—if!* You have the heart to say, that *if* I countenance the love, which from the first hour it was proffered I rejected, you will assist me to recover my boy,—you have the heart to barter with me for my child—my own—only child!—Ulick!" she exclaimed, with a strength and tone of voice that made him start. "Ulick, you know where he is—do not for a moment attempt to deny it. I see it—I feel it—do not turn away your face: look at me! You cannot—you cannot—I see you cannot look me in the face; but you can tell me—tell me, where is my boy?" He attempted to leave the room, but she prevented it. There was something so earnest and so miserable about her, that Ulick O'Sullivan would have given much to have been away; he was rash and impetuous, but he had no perseverance either for good or evil. With the ready quickness of a woman, Margaret saw her advantage, and followed it up.

"Ulick, swear by your mother's grave, that you know not where the child is."

"How should I know?" he replied sullenly, still averting his face; "how should I know—am I a fairy finder?"

"That is no answer. By your hopes of salvation, I charge you, tell me where he is; if you do *not* tell me, here will I kneel and curse you, with the heavy, bitter curses of a bereaved mother's heart."

"No, no," he exclaimed confusedly; "sure the country says Connor O'Gorman has the child."

"It won't do, Ulick—it won't do. Nay, you shall hear me;" Ulick had reached the door, but Margaret sprang after, and seizing his coat, prevented his escape. He struggled to get free, and in the struggle, his vest flew open, and the kerchief with which Margaret had covered Hector when she laid him down to sleep, fell from it. Margaret screamed, and grasping it in her hand, exclaimed, "There! now are you not ashamed of your treachery? My child!—it is you who have stolen my child—base, mean, black-hearted man! I knew that Connor was incapable of such wickedness."

"Well," said O'Sullivan, galled by her triumph in Connor's innocence—"well, and stating a case that I know where the child is, why should I not turn it to my advantage: only, since you

are so proud, so sure of Connor, let him find the boy."

"Stay, Ulick," said Margaret, worn down by the length and strength of the trials she had that day undergone; "if you have any pity—any mercy—for the love of God, give me my child. I will kneel to you—pray to you—I will forgive you all the agony I have suffered, in gratitude for his restoration—you cannot refuse me."

But Sullivan broke from her grasp, leaving her senseless on the floor. He had heard the voices of Peter and two or three policemen approaching the house, and feared to remain; he flew across the field muttering curses on his ill-fortune, which had led him to a line of conduct producing altogether a different result from what he had anticipated.

Peter did not enter the parlour; he had not quite recovered the effects of his overthrow, and had merely entreated the policemen to leave him safely at home. He appeared to have had enough for that night of Irish adventure. Flora found her sister cold and shivering, slowly recovering from a state of insensibility. In vain did she entreat her to try and take some rest; the distracted mother could not find repose;

one object filled her heart; the voice of her child sounded in her ear, and yet he was not there; if she closed her eyes, he was before her; but she opened them to disappointment and woe; despite Flora's entreaties, she would not remain in the house, but resolved to seek Connor or Marcus, and communicate her discovery; and the two sisters set forth in the early moonlight for this purpose. She paused at the first cottage she arrived at; it was a poor miserable hovel; she opened the door, and seated by the turf-fire, which burnt brightly on the hearth, was an old woman, Granny Neale, with her youngest child.

"Any news of the darlint?" exclaimed the old creature, starting up.

"None yet, Granny," replied Margaret. "Where is your son and the children?"

"Where would he be, madam, honey, but afther the darling Hector; and my daughter, too, and all the big children in the barony. Where would they be, ma'am, honey, but tareing the country up for masther Hector? I'll go bail there won't be a hole left unsarched; nor you'll not find on the whole townland a living creature that can go, but what's out this blessed night, and will be, till the angel is found, plase God, and brought home on the *backs* of the counthry. I should take shame

to myself for all Ireland," added the kind old soul—"I should take shame to myself for all Ireland, if man or woman could lay in a bed this night, and the Rose of Blarney seeking her child."

The words brought tears into Flora's eyes; and Margaret, whose restlessness could not be controlled, turned away with a blessing, that she had hardly power to utter.

"Flora," she said, when they had passed through the village, "do you think my child could be concealed in the vaults under Blarney castle? I know that Ulick has been there frequently, and I think I know every turn of the place."

"If there was but a man in the village to go with us," said Flora.

"There is not—but what of that; Flora, dearest, I wish you would go back, I am very well able to proceed—but you are trembling."

"How strange," said Flora, "my tongue is always so brave and my heart so cowardly; and you, who never make any fuss, you are so stout and strong! But I'll not leave you—I'll not leave you, Margaret; you do not think I could do that, do you?—No, no—I am better since I heard the sound of my own voice; it always circulates my blood when I can set my tongue

going. You are not going to the vaults of the old castle, though, Margaret, are you?"

"I am," said Margaret; "first there—it is the Griffin's haunt as well as Ulick's. I'll go there first."

"Oh, sister!" exclaimed Flora.

"You must go back. If you could make a mother, seeking her child, think of herself, you would do so."

"I'll not go back!" said Flora; "and here, Margaret, poor Luath has followed us. I did not think, when Connor gave him to me, a little puppy, he would have been so great a dog—I declare he is quite a protection. I used to quarrel with him for growing so big, now I could almost quarrel with him for being so little. I don't think they would hide Hector in the vaults, Margaret. Dear! how grim the castle looks, standing out against the sky; and see, sister, how the moonlight streams through the window like molten silver—is it not beautiful! There—it has quite the effect of magic—and now you can see it through the port-holes. How heavily the shadows lie in the rock-close. If Marcus were here he would talk of light and shade, and—oh dear! you are not minding what I say."

"I wish you would not speak, dear girl, you

make me nervous; besides, your voice may create alarm."

"There is nobody to alarm—I wish there was. Dear me, the poor people must be very fond of you to leave their homes after a hard day's work, and hunt the country without hope of reward."

"The Irish peasant is but too generous of the only property he possesses, his time; but, indeed, you must remain silent or go home."

The abduction of Hector Lee had been so skilfully arranged, that many of the peasants, who talk of it to this day, assert, that Mabel Griffin, and all the persons concerned in the act, had dealings with the old one, or they never could have contrived it so secretly.

Connor, after his escape from Peter, managed, with Marcus Roche, to organise a sort of plan by means of which he intended to trap the Griffin, for he believed she was the culprit. As yet he had been unsuccessful, but one or two circumstances led him to believe that she was hiding in the vaults of Blarney. Thither at nightfall he resolved to go; and he searched every corner and hole in vain; she was nowhere to be found. Disappointed but not discouraged, he had just ascended from their depths, at the moment when Flora observed to her sister, how

beautiful the castle looked in the distance; though they were still some little way from it. When he had got again fairly into the open air, he paused to consider how he was next to proceed. "That murdering woman," he muttered to himself, "where is she? Now, that's a wretch that would steal a penny out of a blind man's hat—she'd make broth of her father's bones. I was certain I should find her down below, for in general she's everywhere, like bad luck. I've known her to be in four different places at the same time; and if I could but lay my ten commandments on her, I'd have riddled the truth out of her before I'd have left her. The she traitor!—for she's nothing else—it's her or hers have put their cumither on the darling boy. If I could only get an idea as to where she is! Now that I've searched every likely and unlikely place myself, I'll meet my faction in the Black Lynn, and scour the counthry 'till she's found. Well, Heaven be with ould times," he continued, looking round: "this is what we call the hall of the echo;" and he shouted. The shout was returned by the magic nymph, whom he had described to the cockney as travelling there on her own jaunting car. "And I thought to have had lots of fun with that ill-contrived, cranky,

misunderstanding bit of a cockney, in this very spot; but he is hunting me now, without knowing why or wherefore, as if I was a fox or a badger. Sure, I persuaded him the genuine Paddy Blake's echo lived here—that when you said, 'How are you?' would answer, 'Pretty well, I thank you.' It's a beautiful place, altogether," he said; "beautiful—and how bright the night is! please God, before morning, we'll have news that will gladden Margaret's heart. Hush!—was that a noise?" He looked round, but could see no one; however, remembering how closely on a former occasion the Griffin had crept between the banks, he was proceeding to inspect his immediate neighbourhood more closely, when casting his eyes upwards, he perceived the figure of a female standing on the end of one of the ruined walls which is nearly overgrown with ivy. The situation and appearance of the form had something supernatural about it, nor was it till the low soft wail of a sort of warning song, then known in the country, came upon his ear, that he recognised the singer as poor Aileen O'Sullivan.

The perfect stillness of the scene and the wildness of the music, would not, however, have delayed his footsteps, had it not been that

Aileen's gestures, which he perfectly distinguished, commanded his attention. Feeble-minded as she was, there were times when she evinced shrewd intelligence; and though the simple words were not unknown to him, he paused to see if she meant to give them a particular application. He listened and watched.

"Go where the mountain o'erhangs the lake—"

And when she paused, the echo took up the last word and repeated "lake," to her evident delight, for she clapt her hands above her head, and then continued—

"Where the sun-beams sink in the west,"

And again her last word was repeated, as by an invisible spirit.

"Go to the mountain, and find and take—"

She paused, and the word "take" was echoed to her heart's content, for she laughed, and then laughed again, as her laughter danced along the waters.

"The lamb from the eagle's nest."

She sung this last line rapidly, and did not wait for the echo, but disappeared from the wall like a vapour from the mountain's brow.

"'The lamb from the eagle's nest,' there's maning in that," said Connor, joyfully; "the pass-word to the O'Sullivan Still was always 'Eagle;' the Almighty has put it in that poor wild thing's head to put sense into mine. Poor Aileen! she was ever and always fond of me," said Connor: "poor girl!—fond of me in her innocent way; and if she'd had a gentle, kindly mother, she'd have been brought back to reason, I am sure. Aileen, come here avourneen," he cried aloud; "I am sure you have more to tell; yet what need is there for more, sure there's enough tould for any one to be satisfied with! But, Heaven bless you, Aileen!" he continued, a feeling of pure, natural devotion prompting him to remove his hat while he repeated his simple prayer. "May the God in heaven bless you, poor simple maiden! Wandering about the earth, as you are, may all the natural, pure, and innocent things of the world minister to your happiness, or contentment, or whatever it is given to you to feel pleasure in: may the summer sun never be too hot, nor the winter winds too cold, for you; and when the Lord takes your sweet spirit to perfect it in heaven,—may your grave be green with the dews, and bright in the sunshine; and may the purtiest girls in Blarney plant a monument of

the sweetest flowers that grow on Ireland's ground, to the memory of Aileen O'Sullivan!"

"Of who?" inquired a voice.

"What—Flora—Margaret!" exclaimed Connor. "But how is this?—you here at such an hour!"

"Connor," exclaimed Margaret, "I came here, thinking it possible I might find that fiend the Griffin:—thank God, I have met you; I am sure Hector is concealed in some of the haunts of the O'Sullivans."

"I know it," replied Connor, "I will but see my friends in the Black Lynn, and hasten to the Bograh Mountains: bad as Ulick is, I would not *sell the pass* on him, which I happen to know; I would not betray him to the magistrates for worlds."

"You must not go alone," said Margaret, anxiously—"you must not go alone; they would murder the boy and you."

"No, no," replied Connor, "they will not take life."

"But Ulick has been to my cottage," said Margaret, "daring to urge his love;—it flashed upon me he was guilty of the theft—he could not deny it, and I have other proofs: the handkerchief you gave me, with which I co-

vered my child's face, fell from his vest. You must not go alone."

"Heaven bless you for that thought," exclaimed the delighted lover. "Look! I'm a hundred thousand strong! well, chora machree, to content you, send some one you can trust to the Black Lynn—let them tell Marcus Roche to follow the White Gull's Track up the mountain, and stop with the rest of the boys at the top of the Folly—which isn't the top, only the middle—let him stop there, it's only a step below the Grey-beard's Stone, which, to those who know it, conceals one of Ulick's paths to the mountain-still—and say, it's my order that not one of them stir hand or foot, unless they hear a blast of my whistle—which every O'Gorman knows before he's born, —then they may rush to the rescue, for I shall be in danger. I would rather the police had nothing to do with it, so leave it all with Marcus. Heaven look down upon you. I see I am forgiven,"—and, without another word, he rushed away.

"True, true-hearted Connor!" exclaimed Margaret; "would that all his countrymen could reason as truly as they can feel!"

"What a fine bit of sentiment!" said Flora.

"It's very fortunate you met your lover; I wish I could meet mine; bad as he is, he would hardly leave us here by ourselves without—but here comes Connor again, at least, I hope it's no one else." It was Connor.

"Margaret," he said, "rest assured there is no one in the vaults; go home at once; and need I say on this spot, where the first promise of love was made to you that I ever made to woman,—need I say that I'm heart sorry for the past; I wouldn't seem selfish, but somehow, I'd fly more like a lion or some great general, if ye'd just speak with your tongue, what, I think, if I'm not too bould, I've read in your eyes, Margaret—am I forgiven? am I your own Connor?"

"All of my heart that is not with my child, is yours!"

"That's not much, I'm afraid, dear Margaret; but never heed. Go home quickly; trust in God!—away both of you—I must lose no more time. Before to-morrow's noon we'll have the child." And Connor pressed Margaret to his bosom, and disappeared.

"Send some one I can trust to the Lynn," repeated Margaret; "I can find no one—I'll go myself—it is not half a mile."

"Go to the Lynn yourself—which means

myself also," exclaimed Flora. "Now there's the disadvantage of popularity; if you had not been popular, the men and women would have remained at home, and we should have found some one to do our bidding. Now, Heaven help us, we must trust to ourselves. Oh, dear me! suppose we go home, and send Peter Swan; I know he's come in, and gone to his room in the sulks. Down, Luath!" she said to the dog, who wanted to return; "only for you, my sister would not have found her lover; now, Luath, oblige me by finding mine, bad as he is!"

"Flora, we must go ourselves; to expect aid from Peter would be absurd; and, as you say, there is not a human being in the village able to convey a message: let us go at once."

"Look there!" said Flora, pointing to a piece of greensward where the moonlight entered without obstruction; "look there!" and her voice sank into a whisper; "there is a shadow."

"Well," replied Margaret, "where there is a shadow, there must be a substance, and we have no need to fear foes."

"But it is night—and this place lonely."

"I am ashamed for you, Flora; see, it is only a woman—poor Aileen, poor gentle Aileen.

I told you so," she continued, as the girl sung,—

" On the wide river side, when my Connor was near,
No reason had I for to tremble for fear;
His manners were gentle, his heart it was brave,
But now the green rushes wave over his grave."

" Aileen, will you go with us?" said Margaret, when she came to them, her eyes looking as glittering as the stars of heaven, and her step uncertain.

" Where, Mrs. Margaret; where do you want poor Aileen to go?"

" To the Lynn, Aileen; you know the shortest way; and then you shall come back with me, and have bread and honey."

" Bread and honey!" she repeated; " yes, Aileen will go.

" God loves man, and man loves money,
God made the bees, and the bees make honey."

And the three women took their way to the appointed place, Aileen sometimes going before, sometimes walking by their sides. Margaret, remembering her visit to her cottage, endeavoured to obtain some information from Aileen, but could gain none. Sometimes she would laugh, sometimes mutter to herself, sometimes sing, but always appear not to comprehend the

drift of Margaret's inquiries. Margaret was certain this lack of understanding was assumed, from the ready manner in which she turned the subject.

Oh, she knew little Hector and Luath, and Hector and Luath knew her. When they spoke of the Griffin, she only exclaimed, "Cats' claws, cats' claws!" They had got about half way, walking on the darkest side of the path, so that they could see whoever came along the lighted side; the road lay along a paling belonging to a gentleman's pleasure-grounds, and, like many of the palings in my poor dear country, it was broken down,—that is to say, a board here and a board there were missing. They had arrived at a spot from whence they could almost see the place where Connor told them they should meet Marcus; it was a sort of half-deserted farm-house, only inhabited by an old man and woman, who looked after some sheep, as the landlord had taken the ground into his own hands: just as they arrived at this particular spot, they saw three or four persons strike into the path they were pursuing, not from the Lynn, but from an opposite direction;—in an instant, before Margaret and Flora could form any conjecture as to who the parties were, Aileen had dragged them through one of the

apertures into the enclosure, and, clasping Luath round the neck, compelled him to lie down with them in the long grass. In a very little time Margaret had reason to bless the precaution of the half-witted girl, who kept swaying herself backwards and forwards, and muttering, "Cats' claws, cats' claws." At last the tones of a well-known voice were borne on the breeze.

"She deserves it from me, there's no doubt of that—and in for a penny, in for a pound—I may as well be slung or sent out of the country for both as for one."

"That's the language of law and raison," responded the Griffin's voice; the law, my dear, is the thransportation—the *autre peyees*, as the Frinch says—and the running away with the purty widdy is another thing—the rayson; you ought to have done it before—that's my only cause of sorrow."

"It seems a quare time to undertake it," said a strange voice; "and the country up."

"The very time—the *heuruse momen*, as the Frinch says; it is because the country is up, there isn't a man or woman in the village but what's out of it—all in another direction."

"Peter Swan," said Ulick.

"My dear, I wouldn't pay him the compli-

ment of calling *him* a man; he'll put it in his book; let them laugh at the Griffin now, my dear. Take a drop!—Will you be plagued with Flora? she has a hundred pounds, Davy."

"No," said Davy, "I wouldn't be plagued with her tongue for three times the money."

"Keep up your spirit, Mr. Ulick! we must make haste; we shall be late else. Ah! ah! ah! to think of Master Marcus waiting below for Connor—and Connor—ah! ah!—and the Blarney boys scouring the country—and the police on the wrong scent—it's quite *recherchay*, as the Frinch says! I saw Connor once crush a rose under his heel—I know who'll be under our heel soon!"

Luath attempted to bark, but though Aileen held down his head so that the sound was muffled, it reached the Griffin's ear.

"That was a dog, my dear."

"No—it was the noise of some wild animal."

"No," she persisted, "it was a dog; look over the paling, Ulick, there may have been listeners."

Margaret's breath came short and thick. Flora stuffed the ends of her scarf into her mouth to prevent herself from screaming. It was a moment of intense anxiety. The party had halted about three yards in advance of

where they were huddled together, but fortunately a large tree grew between them and the spot where they heard Ulick's heavy shoes scrape the paling, while with his hands firmly grasping the top, he endeavoured to raise himself so as to look into the enclosure.

"Down, Luath, on your life down, sir," whispered Margaret; and the sagacious animal kept silence, though every muscle was ready to extend itself into a spring.

"It was nothing. I believe the devil's dogs are always baying in your ears—they'll have a rare hunt with you yet."

"Keep your compliments for your purty widdy, dear. Won't you have a drop? And they'll never guess where you'll take her to—have no notion of it. You'll have no need for the dew. Ah, dear! why didn't you do this before? though to be sure there never was such a time for it as the presint. The two other lads are true—and Aileen—"

The reply was lost in the distance; nor would the listeners have heard so much, but for the stoppage which had nearly led to their destruction.

Slowly and cautiously did Aileen rise from her lair, and whispering to Margaret, "To the Lynn—poor Aileen must go to the mountain,"

she disappeared amid the trees of the enclosure.

" Come, Flora, come—for God's sake come ; a little haste and energy will place us with Marcus, and in safety."

Flora pulled the ends of her shawl out of her mouth, and in the most piteous of all piteous tones, exclaimed,

" I've bit my tongue !"

THE GROVES OF BLARNEY.

PART IX.

THE morning was breaking, and Aileen, weary and foot-sore, was sleeping in her brother's cottage.

"You see," said Ulick O'Sullivan to the Griffin, as, after a night of disappointments, they entered the cottage; "you see she sleeps, so she couldn't have given any warning."

"I am not sure about anything I either see or hear," replied the hag, as she sank heavily into a seat; "I only know, Mr. Ulick, that the bones are shook out of my flesh, and the flesh off my body, with the taring I've had through the country—I can't stand it as I used—though I can stand more wear and tare than

most. Oh! my bones are all on the disjointed plan; and that mule of Davy's has almost finished me!—There never was such a misfortunate woman—and at my time of life too;—go down to the Still, and get me a drop. My courage, *mon courage*, as the Frinch says, is out."

"Mabel Griffin," said Ulick, looking her stedfastly in the face—"Mabel Griffin, you have been—as all bad women are to whatever men they come near—you have been my curse, in some way or other, ever since I had any dalings with you."

"Thank you, Mr. Ulick, for your civility, sir; and so now we're to have no more dalings, I suppose."

Ulick swore a bitter oath, dooming the Griffin to an eternity of punishment, and had not her strength been a good deal prostrated by the fatigue she had undergone, she would most certainly have returned the compliment in a way he would not have borne, for Ulick possessed none of that native courtesy which distinguished his rival, Connor. He had been rendered sour and malignant by those disappointments which had been in a great degree brought on by his own grievous misconduct. And now that he had returned to his earth, he felt

that the dogs would be upon him, and that he must trust only to his various concealments in the mountain;—he could not for a day or two go down into the valley.

"To the devil with the fair sex!" he exclaimed, after Mabel had returned him a few hard words for his malediction—all she was able to muster on the occasion.

"Oh! fie, Mr. Ulick! *preney gardy*, as the Frinch says; you should not hurt a woman's feelings, Mr. Ulick. Do get me the drop."

"Well thought of," he replied, "very well thought of; we must put even the little business we've been doing out of the way; and then, why if they do come, and can't find what they seek, they must go away again. I'll set a couple of the boys to work at the forge entrance a little below, for a better cloak—it's soon done."

"Don't forgit my drop, my dear; I'm, as a body may say, not myself without it."

Ulick disappeared behind the bed; and the Griffin being, as she considered, fairly alone, proceeded to reconnoitre. First of all, she appropriated a couple of hanks of Aileen's coarse spinning to her own use, thrusting them into her pocket; she then peeped into a solitary cupboard, but found nothing there suited to her taste or necessities, except a peculiarly carved

spoon, and that disappeared; she then appropriated a silver thimble, one of poor Aileen's bits of finery, and, having so done, sat down, and from another pocket drew forth a rich coral necklace.

"It's better than my own," she muttered, fingering the beads; "I wonder what Miss Florry will say when she misses her purty ornament; Misther Marcus, I know, bought it for her at Gattie's, on the South Mall—a fool and his money soon parted; and these two rings—how nate the hair-pin prodded them on Mrs. Lee's white pin-cushion—*gages d'amour*, as the Frinch says. While Ulick was doctoring the misfortunate Cockney, I had an eye to the ready pinny. Faith I'd be none the worse of these two turkey eggs I picked up on the retreat out of Paddy Noran's outhouse, if I had any way to bile 'em —'twas very kind of me to look afther his eggs, whin he was galavanting the counthry after Masther Lee—the omadawn! I wonder what 'ill Ulick do with the child, or where 'ill he hide it?—I'd let it go. Ah! ah!—I wonder what account Misther Pether 'ill give of the men that cropt one side of his hair, and tied his legs to the foot-rail of the bed! I'd have got him off that punishment but for the fool he made of me—to take Connor, then let him away, and then slinge

away himself. Well, I'll say this much, that none bothers the law equal to the Peelers. I never dreamed of *his* getting off—and the examination and one thing or another would have gained time, and time is money, or money's worth. Poor little Englisher! the roars of him were terrible—and to think both the girls were away. Ulick would have locked Norry the maid in the losset but for me—I never can abide that sort of thing since the accident that happened to my poor darling husband."

Having finished her soliloquy, she had just time to pocket her spoils when Ulick re-entered.

"Where's the drop, dear?"

"What do I care?—the O'Gormans, I am sure, will be here presently. What's to be done with the child? Remember, Mabel Griffin, it was no act of mine—*you* stole it, dressed yourself up as a sailor for the purpose, and brought it here—the plans, ending in ruin, were yours. Oh the fool I was to listen to them!—what will be the upshot of it all?"

"Keep your temper, dear. Where have you put the boy?"

"Ah! at the back of the forge—they'll be apt to think he's deeper in it."

"I wish he was deep, dear."

"So do I—but——"

"Ah! poor dear! your heart is wake—though it's bitter black. Where's the drop?—I must go, dear—I have excuses enough for being on the mountain—get me the drop."

"Mabel, if this boy is found, I must fly."

"What 'ill find him, dear? I tell you what, I'd get rid of twinty like him, to punish the crew he belongs to. You're not a man to bear the disappointment of last night. Where could the women ha' been?—"

Suddenly Aileen started from her slumbers, and, after throwing her arms round her brother's neck, ran to the door.

"Does she hear anything?" inquired the Griffin.

"I don't know," replied Ulick. "Any one coming, sister?"

"No; Aileen sees no one but the wild crow picking the first worms."

"That's good," said Ulick; "the crows never light steadily when man is near—come with me, and I'll give ye the drop."

And while Ulick and the Griffin departed, Aileen spread her bed neatly, and began to light the fire. The excavation where distillation had been so frequently practised, was perfectly cleared of everything that could excite suspicion—even the smell of potheen was banished by the more overpowering one of brimstone;

and yet the entrance was carefully concealed. Ulick knew perfectly well that if O'Gorman's party *only* ascended to his haunts, his illicit practices would not be disturbed; but there were hawks abroad whom he feared much more, though he trusted to the sagacity and fidelity of his people to baffle them. Indeed the mountain forge was as unsuspicious looking a place as the most arrant smuggler could desire; and the two fellows who occasionally officiated there —one of whom, by trade a smith, shod horses and mended wheels with tolerable skill—were sufficiently *au fait* at their business to blindfold the few wayfarers who passed through the wild and picturesque scenery. The rude shed, resting against a rock, was as simple and inconvenient as any one could imagine a forge in such an uncultivated district to be; and the smoke that occasionally ascended from the smithy was an excellent pretext, if anything was said in the valley respecting the "smoking mountain." Of course Ulick O'Sullivan was not known to have anything to do with the forge—it was not sufficiently near his cottage to excite suspicion, and, moreover, commanded a different view.

"It's a poor case," said one of the fellows to the other, "to be here doing nothing; we made a bad hand of the job last night; and troth!

I'd rather be with the Whiteboys, or light boys, or any boys that would show us fun—or at the Cove of Cork, or anywhere. Do you know, Davy, it's meself thinks there's no luck with the O'Sullivans at all at all. What a quare thing luck is!"

"So it is," observed the other, who was lazily hammering some rusty nails on a piece of something that served as an anvil; "luck's mighty quare intirely, and a thing there's no turning either for good or bad; take my word for it, Ulick's luck is turned."

"So it is; for sure the little thing last night was as nately planned as anything I iver heerd tell of. When Murphy Donohue ran off with Ally Greveling, he did it and her mother and two sisters in the *screetches*—it wasn't (to all appearance) half as certain as this—only I wonder it never came into Ulick's head before—"

"'Twasn't his luck."

"Did you ever think," said Davy, lowering his voice, "that Cat's-claws had an evil eye? because—it's mighty quare—I never knew her gather much to a house that didn't grow uncomfortable in itself afther a time."

"'Twas their luck turned, maybe."

"Maybe so. See what a purty slip of a girl Gracey Conway was till she got so thick with

Mabel, and now *the sun never shines on the path she walks.*"

"She's grown bitther-hearted, as most girls do, whin they meet a misfortune—but 'twas her luck."

"No doubt; but, take my word for it, the grass is all the greener and the butter the more plenty where her shadow niver comes. I don't over much like knowing women—somehow they're not like women; see Shawn Gow, how he's done up—out of the counthry—and they say it was *she* sould the pass on him."

"Well, *'twas his luck,* and that's all about it. My mind would be easier if the child hadn't been touched—it's ill meddling with widdy's childre—somehow the Almighty has a care over them—to be sure he's the only Father they have——"

"You should have been a Methody; you'd look beautiful in a black cap,"* sneered the least superstitious of the two; adding, "Some of thim black-caps are desperate 'cute, and that's more than you are; I saw one, not a week ago, whin I was up in Mallow, seeing after poor

* As late as the year 1812, itinerant preachers in Ireland used to wear black hunting-caps, to protect their heads against the stones with which they were frequently pelted.

Biddy Dacey that's *in, for mistaking a cotton print in a shop windy for her gown-piece that she had in her box at home.* No one ever evened the like of it to her before."

"'Twas her luck!" exclaimed the other.

"Well, as I was saying, the black-cap was reading out of a Protestant Bible, and *experiminting*, as father Leary said on the altar last Sunday, about what he could have no knowledge of; and the boys that had sinse in their heads, said they would not let the poor ignorant people, that knew no better than maybe to take up with such nonsense, be corrupted. And so they pickt up a good handful of flint-stones, and filling their pockets purty tidy, they followed the black-cap, till they got him reading for the dear life, and he close by—where do you think?"

"How do I know?"

"The priest's house!"

"O blessed Virgin between us and harm!"

"Yes; and 'you unchristian thraitor,' said Corny Macdowl, (him that returned from Bottomy Bay, where he was sent by false swearing,) 'I don't mind to take another voyage at the expince of government for your sake;' and he aimed at the black-cap."

"Well!"

"Well—he missed his aim. 'Wait,' said the black-cap, 'for one minute. Now just to show you something—just wait for one minute, and give me that one minute to move where I plase,' says he, as mild as the new May-moon, 'and then, Mister Corny, I'll let you peg stones at me, and stand as long as ever you like, and as still as a statute,' says he. Well, the boys were all rejoiced at this, and made the bargain, wondering if he had any charm about him to soften the stones; and what did he do, but plant himself with his back right up against father Leary's own parlour windy, that had just been glazed—three new panes and four spliced. 'Now come on, good boys,' says he, quite sober like; 'here I am, pelt away—I'll stand it all,'—that's what he said, the little black villain, well knowing they would not raise a finger, much less a stone, to put in danger the priest's window."

"Well, he had luck: but who's that coming up the path?"

"Sorra a bit of me knows—there's no sign of any one, but the one—and sure it wouldn't be Billy Bogy, my lord's *natural*." *

* Fool—idiot,—even now those poor harmless maniacs attach themselves to some gentleman's family, and are called Mrs. So-and-so's *fool*, or Squire B.'s *natural*.

"No, I don't think it's Billy—there's a dale more fools going now than there used to be in ould times. I suppose it's the wisdom the world is getting on with that turns their brains; —but who is it? He can't know the path well, for he makes right for the precipice in front of the smithy; and it's more than mortal could leap or climb. Sign him to go round by the path."

The chasm to which the last speaker alluded was deep, and apparently wide; between it and the shed was an uneven rocky space of probably twenty yards. It seemed as if some mighty convulsion had shattered this particular portion of the mountain, forming a rocky hollow, wide in the centre, (which was directly opposite the shed,) and narrowing to the extremities until it closed. The path round this huge chasm was difficult and circuitous—seldom traversed, as I have said before, but by such persons as desired to explore the terrific effects of mountain scenery, or had some particular motive for their visit. The military and police had long induced the belief that the heights of the mountain were inaccessible; and there is no doubt but half-a-dozen tolerably well-armed men could have defended the bridle-path, from which the seeming idiot had wandered, against a score of soldiers.

"It can't be no one particular," said Davy, "for no one that had a mind to be curos where it wasn't wanting would come alone; we're not strong enough for open war, and it's not much good trying at it now."

"What a shockin' natural the craythur must be!—see, he's opposite now, afther all the signs we made—send him round." And, after prying into the ravine, the poor fellow crept down from whence he had crawled up, and trotted along the path.

"Not a single traveller has past the Grey-beard's stone this blessed morning," said Davy; "and the hot mist lies so close in the valley, that I can't see that itself now.—I think there's always a powerful mist when the *ould cat's* up here; I wonder what hoult she can have on the masther—and yet he minds her."

"Hoult enough, you stupid; don't they both *hate the one man*. Talk o' love's bonds!—I tell you, and I know it, the bonds of *hate* are ten times as strong."

He had hardly finished his sentence, when the natural, who had been obliged to descend to the path, appeared at the corner; he had a large loose wrapping-coat, fastened by a long skewer at the throat, so that it hung round him like a cloak; his hat was one of the worst

specimens of Irish hats, and a "wisp" of straw formed its only crown; the hair which streamed at each side of his face was red, and nearly covered his cheeks, and the hat fell so completely over his brows as effectually to shade his eyes.

"Who are ye, darlint?" inquired Davy.

"I'm not darlint," replied the man in an idiotic tone, and standing with his toes turned in, while his fingers grappled with the solitary button of his coat; "I'm not darlint; I'm Conny the boy, the whirling blade. Hurroo!"

"And who sent you here?"

"Who! why one of the eagle's feathers."

"For what?"

"For what! not for fun."

"Right! ye omadawn—for what?"

"The kites is awake."

"Augh, we know that! — what news you bring us. You'll tell us the Rock of Cashel's gone on a visit to the Cove of Cork."

"No, it ain't; Conny didn't see it; but the aigle's feather heard tell of the kites."

"Which of the feathers was it?"

The idiot rubbed his forefinger along his brow, and then began to cry, "Don't let me be kilt—be kilt!—I've forgot."

"You ought to be made to remember, you

born fool; that you ought. How do we know it's truth ye're telling. Where did ye come from?"

"From beyant the lakes, where I lost my vocation. Don't bate me, Conny's got a sore foot. May he sit down?"

"Who sent him, I wonder?" said one fellow, looking at him suspiciously.

"Augh, how should we know?—some of the boys that maybe didn't believe we war on our guard; he's rather of a stranger, but there's more fools do be walking the country now than formerly, as I said before. The whole thing was bothered; betwixt you and I and the corner, the masther's heart's not over strong."

"Where's the Aigle himself?" inquired the visiter; "Conny would like to lave his card at his country-house. You're purty gintlemin, eh, eh!—purty gintlemin—he, he!—purty gintlemin to invite to a small tea-party. Here I am, wanting to see the aigle by'n-by, but I'm affeered you didn't expect me, as the fox said whin he called to ask after the health of the sitting hen."

"That's not bad," said one of the watchers.

"Conny 'ill do better," he said. "Maybe I'm not welcome, as the monkey said whin he took the two pieces of cheese; maybe 'ill

not make myself at home, as the spark said whin he bid good-morrow to the gunpowder; maybe—but Conny won't tell you any more, he won't, for it's the could shoulder ye're showing to Conny, and that's a fool's turn ye're doing."

"How's that, Conny, ye 'cute one."

"Why, niver show a could shoulder to one who has friends,—niver show a could shoulder to one who has strength,"—(he pulled a very stout stick from under his coat, as he spoke and eyed it affectionately,)—"niver show a could shoulder to a boy with a purse of money." And he shook the foot of an old stocking with great glee in which some halfpence rattled merrily.

"There's maning in that," said one of the men. "I shouldn't wonder if he was the one they call knowing Conny of the lake—are ye?"

"I'm Conny, the darlint, whooroo!"

"Are ye hungry?"

"No; I've got breakfast here, but no butter. I pick up whatever I gets, and keep it, as the bees do, till it's wanted,—hurroo!"

"I say, fooley."

"My name's Conny, 'cause my mother's name was Carney; and my sister's name is Patty, 'cause my father's name was Paddy; so there's a cause for everything, as the water said whin it put the fire out."

" Well then, Conny, what would you do if you caught a weazel asleep?"

" I wouldn't put my finger in its mouth, for fear it 'ud waken."

At this moment, little Hector Lee, who was tied and concealed behind the partition which communicated in an almost imperceptible manner with the place where they distilled the proscribed spirits, moved so as to throw something down, and then uttered a faint cry. This excavation was chosen, it must be remembered, as being so near the public entrance, that they imagined those who sought the child would look for him in the interior of the place, to which (if they had secret information) they would at once proceed. Ulick himself had as yet formed no arrangement as to his ultimate destiny; and had all along wanted firmness to execute either his own plans, or the plans of his friend the Griffin.

The people about had dosed the child with spirits, to keep him quiet, to such a degree that his little cry was such as children utter in a disturbed sleep. The fellows looked at each other, and at the idiot, who manifested no curiosity as to the noise: one of them left the forge, and presently was heard saying roughly, " He has no call for bread and milk—don't ye see how sleepy he is?" When he returned, he whispered to his companion that " Aileen was

always after the lamb, bothering!" Though the time passed, the mist still lay heavy in the valley, and little could be seen distinctly at a very great distance beyond the ravine. The natural bandied jests and snatches of songs and sharp words with his companions, who, notwithstanding his simplicity, did not seem disposed to leave him a moment alone; indeed they watched him very narrowly. He exhibited no desire to go away, nor did he evince any intention to pry about, though his keen eyes moved with rapidity and earnestness when those of the men were not fixed upon him. A short time after Aileen's anxiety about the child had been made manifest, Ulick O'Sullivan lounged into the forge from the mountain entrance. The idiot started up the instant he saw him, and Ulick looked at him suspiciously.

"Mr. Aigle, sir," said Conny, "there are kites abroad."

"And who are you, that tell me what I know?"

"Find out, sir, not to make you an uncivil answer;—I've tould you there war kites abroad, and if I was a kite, I needn't have come alone, so I'll throuble you not to look at me as if you'd ate me, Misther Aigle; but any way, Misther Ulick, I'll just take up two minutes of yer time to tell ye a fable, a morsel of a thing I learnt of

my mother, who was a knowing woman,—maybe it will divart you, sir:—Onct upon a time there was a poor sheep—a ewe sheep she was, fair and white as ever was sprinkled by the dew of a May morning; and this ewe had one lamb——"

"Talk like a man, and not like a ——"

Ulick paused; there was something in the story-teller he did not like.

"Like a what?" inquired Conny; "don't baulk yer fancy, say it out."

"Go on," said Ulick.

The men perceived a great change in the idiot's manner, though they did not choose to say so.

"The ewe had one lamb, and she thought a dale of it, as all faymale things do of their young; but maybe she thought more of it on account that the ould shepherd, who ought to have taken care of the little lamb, was—ye're more larned than me, Mr. Ulick, so you will know what I mean, whin I say, the ould shepherd was *mortus est*, and that manes, I believe, dead,—and the lamb had no one to look to for a sup of milk, or a naggin of whiskey, or anything that way, but herself; and so the poor purty ewe thought if she could pick up something in the way of a friend to take care of herself and the lamb, it would be no bad plan; and you know, Mr. Ulick,——"

"I know—what do I know about such nonsense?" said Ulick, fiercely.

"Why, you do know," he said, "that, set a ewe and her lamb in a fine field of clover, and sorra a pig, or an ass, or a goose,—or a wolf either—but what 'ill be wanting share of the bit and the sup she has for herself and her young."

"Well, maybe so," said Ulick, "but who told you to tell me this nonsense?"

"Well, she formed a friendship with—what do you think?" he continued, without heeding the question.

"How do I know?" said Ulick.

"With a dog," replied the stranger, "and a sad dog; though, by my soul, it's often merry he was when he had the luck to fall into pleasant company, which wasn't often; there was nothing mane, nor pimping, nor prying about him; he was a bould, gay, rollicking, waglum-tailums sort of a dog."

"Stuff," exclaimed his auditor, impatiently.

"Faith he was, and good stuff too," said Conny, "ye're right for onct; and so the sheep, poor craythur, placed a deal of reliance on the dog: but what do ye think now?—why a devil of a wolf kept ever such long watch, thinking to get both the ewe and her lamb into his clutches, but he couldn't on account of the dog; so what d'ye think the base, black-hearted, grim scoun-

drel did? I'm sure you don't know, because its what every honest-hearted Irishman would scorn to think of; he watched his opportunity, and, on the sly, whin the dog, little draming of his wickedness, was slouching about the field with his tail between his legs, fretting himself to fiddle-strings over a scrap of a misunderstanding he had with his friend the sheep;—what d'ye think he did? Like a carnivorous, dirty, mane scoundrel—as he is—he stole the innocent lamb from the mother's side; but what did the dog, Mr. Ulick,—what did the dog?—he tracked the wolf, bould and honest, and in the shine of day, to his own den, and whin he got him face to face—so—what did he say?—he shouted,

"HECTOR, HECTOR, MY BOY!"

The idiot, idiot no longer, called the name of the stolen child at the top of his voice, and in an instant flung off the red wig and hat, which had so completely concealed and changed the expression of his features, and Connor O'Gorman stood with the air of a conqueror, alone and unarmed, in the den of his foe.

There was a noise, a rustle within, and before Ulick could recover from the effect of the discovery—which though, during Connor's latter words, he had anticipated, came upon him unex-

pectedly—little Hector Lee, with pallid cheek and reddened eyes, rushed to his friend and playfellow, exclaiming, "Here, Connor, here!"

"Now, Mr. Wolf," said Connor, bravely and boldly, "do you feel ashamed of yourself? False-hearted and cowardly, to steal the tender lamb from the mother! The time will come when the memory of this will hang like a millstone about your neck. Look, Ulick, a man may do a wild or violent sin, and, with the devil at his elbow, (where he often is with the best of us,) take human life in haste or passion; but O, to creep like a snake, and pilfer—like a thief!"

"Boys," exclaimed Ulick, fiercely turning to the men, "boys, shall we bear this? What are you about—down with him."

The face of Aileen, while her brother spoke, was seen peeping from the den whence the child had just escaped, so that there could be no doubt of her having loosened the cords that had bound him: the men, thus commanded, looked at each other, and prepared, but not with extraordinary speed, to obey Ulick's commands, and the child clung to O'Gorman as if it were for life.

"Keep off," said Connor coolly, but with a determination of voice and manner which proved his firmness — "keep off — the first

of ye who lays a finger on Connor O'Gorman will have small chance of absolution; that's all I've got to say. Do you think I was going to trust these *four bones*, that I've a regard for, into the heart of O'Sullivan's den without having a *back* to them? There's as many as twenty of my faction at the Grey-beard's stone, and I have only to give them the *family call*—you have heard it before, boys, every one of you—and it wouldn't be the first time it called a muster to field,—whether for fight or play does not matter now; they know where I'm come to, and I would have been long sorry to put myself into a dirty disguise, if it had not been that I did not want your outlayers to know me, nor did I want the Peelers to track me, and so perhaps be the out-and-out destruction of you. But *my* men know where I am; the mist is clearing, you can see the sign of the Grey-beard's stone at this moment,—they are there, but they'll come no farther unless I whistle—and then, your blood be on your own heads! I tell you there are twenty at the very least,—so I think Mr. O'Sullivan, Masther Hector Lee and myself may bid you good-morning. Hector, my pet," he added, taking him tenderly in his arms, "hold fast to me, darling, come what come may." And unmolested he passed the threshold.

But it could not be supposed that Ulick O'Sullivan would permit his prey to escape him after having risked so much, nor that he would permit one he hated with so bitter a hatred to go forth without making some effort at the revenge he had so anxiously panted to obtain. Connor walked towards the path by which he had ascended, and then Ulick turned on the men, who, lawless as they were, had not relished the detention of a child; to run away with a woman was not unfrequent, but stealing a child seemed to them like robbing a wren's nest, pitiful and unlucky.

"Now, by ——," he exclaimed, "if you let him——" but he was interrupted by the Griffin's rushing forward with his musket, and furious as a Pythoness, exclaiming, "So this is your work, you stupid crew! here, Ulick, his back is to you; I loaded it myself, that kep me,—you can't miss him; and see there's three of our own boys coming up the very path he must pass—stop, don't fire yet!—stop—the noise!—afther him, Tim; now, Larry—you have him back and front; five min on the hill, and I'm all as one as another, would keep thirty off; give me the musket, — Ulick, I'll watch — close quarters, break the brat's neck down the ravine —who'll know?"

And instigated by this demon, who foamed with passion while uttering, with the addition of many oaths, what I have imperfectly repeated, the men rushed after O'Gorman. Connor saw in an instant the danger he was in; he hurried forward until he encountered those of the O'Sullivan faction, whom the Griffin had at once recognised. He eyed the ravine, but it was wide; the life of Margaret Lee's child was in his keeping; the words of the Griffin came upon his ear. He knew her influence and her hatred—his enemies pressed upon him both before and behind—he heard the one shout to the other, and saw the advancing party spread upon his path; he was aware of the savage character of his foes. The boy clung to him in all the helplessness of childhood,—*if*—he could leap the chasm he was safe, he would have gained so much—if!—

The mist had risen from the valley, and the noisome vapour had become a summer cloud. The men who, according to Connor's orders, assembled at the Grey Beard's Stone, grew impatient of the delay. With them were Mar-

garet and Flora—who could restrain the impatience of a mother?

"I can bear it no longer," exclaimed Margaret Lee; "this suspense is worse than death." The sisters wandered a little up the hill, Margaret in advance. She could see the mountain forge hanging far above, like the nest of a foul bird on a blasted tree.

"Flora!—Marcus!" she called aloud tossing her arms wildly in the air; "see!—look—there!—on the mountain!—it is he—it is Connor—he has———there is a mist before my eyes—but I *feel* he has my child! For God's love, tell me—am I not right? They are pursuing him—he looks back."

Margaret fell upon her knees on the side of that wild mountain. She tried to pray; her heart, her mother's heart, appealed in its loud beatings to the Almighty. Marcus and his friends, seeing Connor thus hemmed in, rushed wildly upwards. Flora sank by her sister's side, and then observed what passed.

"I see Ulick"—she said; "Connor is not coming down the path. Courage, dear Margaret—ah! Ulick gains on him—there is the Griffin!" As she spoke, the report of a musket rang sharply through the mountain air. Margaret Lee echoed it by a loud and piercing

scream. Springing from her knees, she would have flown towards the chasm, but Nature was overpowered—she fell senseless to the earth.

"Margaret!—sister!—dearest!" cried Flora, "Connor has done something wonderful I know, for Marcus is both shouting and running, quite alive. Will not the cries of the O'Gormans rouse you? Connor is carrying Hector down the mountain; the factions are fighting like wild animals."

When Margaret Lee recovered her senses, her head was resting on Connor's bosom, and her child was clinging round her neck.

THE GROVES OF BLARNEY.

CONCLUSION.

NEARLY two years had elapsed since the occurrence of the events I have endeavoured to describe; and I do not know whether my readers may be surprised by the fact, but there was then no such person as Margaret Lee in existence; within a week after the restoration of her child, she became Margaret O'Gorman!

The harvest moon was riding in all its glory up the heavens, and a family party were assembled in the quiet neat parlour of the Bees' Nest. —I said quiet and neat, did I not?—Well, it was so, but it was not quite as quiet, nor, I think, quite as neat, as of old. Men, particularly Irishmen, do so litter a room—to be

sure, Margaret looked—not black—there had not been a single black look exchanged between Margaret and Connor since their marriage, but blue*ish*, sometimes, when her husband threw his great-coat on the polished table, and then Connor would glance towards her, and say, "Cuishla machree!" and Margaret, who never could resist that, would smile, and very gently and very softly remove the coat, and hang it on its own particular peg in the hall. Moreover, Hector was growing a great boy, and would sometimes leave a kite, or a top, in the room. And there was a pretty bassanet with green curtains in the corner, with a real living baby-boy fast asleep in it—certainly that baby is very like Connor O'Gorman.

But to return to the little party on whom the harvest moon was smiling.

Margaret was seated at her table, "doing some quilling;" Connor was applying his strength and skill in notching, and shaving, and modelling the top of a blackthorn stick; Marcus Roche was writing; Flora was sitting next to him, jogging his elbow, to his great annoyance. Margaret wore no cap; Flora had a pretty little lace one jauntily put on; Flora wished to look matronly. She had only been married two months—in ten years' time Mrs. Marcus

Roche will, in all probability, throw off her cap, and

"Wish to feel (or seem) a girl again!"

The little baby was, as I have said, asleep in its bassanet, and Hector Lee was gone to bed.

"How can I write, Flora, if you jog my elbow so?" said Marcus to his bride.

"I am sure you have written enough—what can you find to say?"

"Dear Flora, I have written a great deal about you."

"Marcus," said Connor, looking up from his employment, "just draw a large tongue on the paper, and Peter will understand you intend that for Flora. Flora dear, do you remember the night you bit your tongue?"

"That was the night," observed Margaret slily, "when a man called Davy, said he would not have your tongue for three times your fortune."

"What an admirable memory you have, sister, for disagreeables!"

"I am sure I never said your tongue was disagreeable, Flora," replied Margaret; and then she added, "Connor, have you heard any thing of your sister Alice to-day?"

"Nothing," sighed Connor; "poor Alice's

mind, never strong, except in what women are always strong in—affection—was so warped by that horrid Griffin's art, that notwithstanding all she knew of her badness, she persisted in the cunning she had learnt of her, and ended, as you know, by marrying a person we cannot tolerate."

"Oh, Connor, he will improve—I hope he will."

"If you undertake his care, *darlint*, I'm sure he will," replied her husband, fondly.

"Well, how sweet you are to each other," said Flora; "Marcus never says half so much to me."

"When I do say anything sweet, as you call it, Flora," replied Marcus, looking up, "when I do, you are sure to snub me!"

"But I am better than I was," she replied—"am I not? Well, Marcus, shall I tell you the truth? I know what makes me odd and sharp sometimes; it is this—you were suddenly raised much above me by your extraordinary good fortune," (a relative had died, and, as was expected, left Marcus 'well to do in the world,') "and yet you would marry me. I fear—for in every respect you are so much, much better than I am—that you may look down upon me, unless I am high and———"

"Why what nonsense you talk," interrupted Margaret; "you do nothing but talk nonsense; when Marcus was not rich, you were quite as saucy to him."

"But not saucy in the way I am now, was I, Marcus?"

"Not quite so bad, I think," was Marcus's quiet reply.

"Well, I *am* very sorry indeed," she answered, and while she spoke there was a tone of deep tenderness in her voice; "for I try my best to be quiet and what is called lady-like, as I ought to be, being the wife of one so truly wise, and good, and rich as Marcus Roche; but somehow gay thoughts grow in my heart, and such pert words bound to my lips, that if I kept them in——"

"You'd bite your tongue," interrupted Connor.

And Connor was rewarded for his untimely reminder by a box on the ear, of so audible a nature, that Margaret looked reproachfully in Flora's face.

"It's no use," she said, "sister, looking so at me; dear Connor, now the box is given, I'd kiss and make friends, but that Margaret might be jealous. I am very thoughtful sometimes, and very sorry; and I go on from morning

till night, sinning and repenting, sinning and repenting, until I wonder, dear Marcus, how you ever loved me."

Marcus, the generous, gentle-hearted Marcus, looked up from his employment, and when he saw the lovely face beaming with such arch, yet sweet expression turned towards him, he did not at all agree as to the wonder she so prettily expressed; indeed, if Flora had been somewhat silly, I doubt not (if such were possible) but Marcus would have loved her more. Your grave, clever book-worms, in nine cases out of ten, always choose pretty silly wives. No man yet ever loved a woman for her cleverness—it is a perpetual reproof to the thousand and one little absurdities of which the best of men are guilty, and for which, perhaps, we women love them all the better;—the truth is, that the folly of the one sex is an excellent excuse for the folly of the other.

"I shall never forget," said Margaret, "the rapidity with which my poor little cousin, the Swan of Bloomsbury, as Connor called him, quitted the Green Island, which he visited to make a book."

"And the piteous letter he wrote on his landing at Liverpool, recounting the misfortunes of his *tower*," added Flora, "and all in less

than a week;—first, the attack made upon him by the beggars, and the difficulty he had (according to his own account) to save himself from being robbed by those droll fellows, who, half from kindness and half from a love of mischief wished to carry his luggage."

"Yes," said Connor, "we have quick perceptions, and it is at all times very hard to avoid playing on the absurdities of our fellow creatures."

"Very, indeed," echoed Flora with a sigh, at which they all laughed, and Flora continued her recapitulation of Peter's troubles. "Then he tumbled into the vaults of Blarney Castle, and fancied he saw a ghost; indeed I am told that to this day he is very mysterious on the subject—then he had various specimens of the character of the country exhibited by our friend here—eh, Connor?"

"Flora!" exclaimed Margaret, in a tone of entreaty.

"Oh, yes, he had; a fair, and a fight, and a——; well there, Margaret, I'm silent, silent as a lark at Christmas. But the crowning thing of all, was the night that wretch O'Sullivan, and the Griffin, and the rest of them came here, and, when they could not find Margaret, tied him hand and foot, cut the hair off one side of

his head, blackened his face, and made him take some absurd oath, as he called it, that he thinks made him a United Irishman, which, in spite of himself, he believes it is his fate to continue till the day of his death."

"I wonder what he can want with this shillela that I'm fixing for him," inquired Connor.

"Oh," replied Margaret, "I believe there are hundreds of English who attach some destructive property to an Irish shillela: it is a pity they should be undeceived."

"Well," said Connor, "my Meggy, that observation was not like you; I should like the English to come and see us, and then judge for themselves, if we are the despicable set of savages we are represented to be; our greatest crime is *our poverty*—but, to be sure, *that* is a crime all over the world."

"You are," said Flora, curling her nose and elevating one eyebrow, as she always did when about to say anything saucy, "you *are* a hundred years behind us in civilization."

"*You! us!*" repeated Marcus, laying down his pen, while Connor gave the blackthorn *such* a cut;—"why, queen of flowers! if *we* are as you say, more shame to England, with her advantages, with her prosperity, with her refinement;—why have we been suffered to drag on

our existence like a poor relation—instead of a cherished sister? It is in vain that England boasts her sympathy with our distress, while our peasants continue to *starve;* it is absurd to talk to a man of peace and contentment, while his children are dying of hunger, in nakedness, by the way side. High-minded English individuals have ever been liberal to us; but we would prefer English *justice* to English *charity.* There is abundant scope for speculation in the island, where English capital might be employed to the advantage of both countries—there are bogs to be reclaimed—mines to be worked—and factories to be erected. Look how prosperous they are in the north, how comparatively comfortable in the county Wexford—particularly in that portion, such as the neighbourhood of Johnstown Castle, and the vicinity of Bannow, where landlords reside and superintend the judicious changes (changes without violence to prejudice or feeling) that take place, and are ready to cheer the peasant onwards to the attainment of those comforts which are considered essential in well-regulated England."

"Stop, stop, Marcus," said Flora, laughing; "if instead of three hundred a-year and a pet little farm, your rich relation had bequeathed

you two thousand a year, you should have been a great parliament man, and I would have been a great parliament woman—wouldn't I ride an Arabian and leap a five-barred gate every morning before breakfast?"

"I shall never be a parliament man," said the gentle Marcus, resuming his occupation when his feelings were calmed down to their usual tone, "I shall never be a parliament man, though I hope to be as useful as one in my own sphere."

"Oh," exclaimed Connor, "I knew I had forgotten to tell you something I heard in town this morning."

"What is it?" said Margaret.

"Why, there has been news of the Griffin."

"What of cat's claws, as poor Aileen calls her?" inquired Flora.

"Thus much," he replied; "you know the trinkets found upon her person, together with one or two other awkward circumstances, caused her transportation."

"Yes, we all know that," said Flora. "Spiteful old toad! when they went to search her, she pulled out my coral necklace, under pretence of giving it up, and then snapt the string so that all the beads rolled down the mountain."

"And swallowed one of my rings," said Margaret, mournfully.

"Well, she created a terrible disturbance on board the transport," said Connor: "it was no use attempting to punish her as any one else would have been punished; she managed the men and corrupted the women, and then they put her in solitary confinement, and she tried to blow up the powder; and she contrived some way to get at the spirit store;—at all events the captain declared that he had made four voyages to Botany Bay, and that the anxieties ofthe four put together would not amount to a tithe of what he suffered when Mabel Griffin was his passenger."

"I can believe it," said Margaret.

"It so happened," continued Connor, "that the first person she met after her landing, where she was sentenced to hard labour, was her third or fourth husband, I am not certain which, and she pounced upon him as an eagle would on a leveret; she insisted on her claim, and kicked up such a *shindy* that she was ordered into irons, when—what should the man turn out to be, who was putting on the darbies?"

"The what?" inquired Margaret.

"Why, fetters, to be sure, or handcuffs, I don't know which, but I know it's one or the other," said Flora, who always felt a very unfeminine pride in a slight acquaintance with slang.

"I am sure *I* don't know, but pray tell us," exclaimed Margaret.

"Why, her *second* husband!—of course, she declined any farther claim on the fourth, finding that the second was a man having authority; but I heard tell, nothing could surpass the scene between the two husbands, one resigning the lady to the other with the utmost politeness, while the Griffin eyed them both, at one moment with her sly leer of familiarity, the next hardening her features into the fiendish expression, which once seen could never be forgotten."

"Is that all?" inquired Flora.

"ALL!" repeated Connor; "is it not enough?"

"Why *pretty* well, but not *very* well, for the Griffin; I thought she'd have blown up the government-house, (I suppose there is one,) or perhaps met and married Ulick O'Sullivan."

"Poor Ulick!" said Margaret; "that indeed would be a worse fate than even he deserved."

"Well," said Connor, laughing, "it is astonishing how gentle a woman always is to the faults of an old lover; however, Margaret, as he was a lover of *yours*, I am very glad his exile was voluntary."

"And then," said Margaret, "he paid us a delicate compliment by his request that I would watch over poor Aileen; gratitude to the girl would have obliged me to do so; and, moreover, there is something so sweet, so mournful, so interesting about her, that it would be impossible to know and not love her."

"It is strange—" observed Connor; and, before finishing his sentence, I cannot help remarking how much Connor's manner and mode of speaking had improved since his marriage; not that he had lost his sweet musical brogue, but there was a propriety and fitness in what he said, mingled with his old habits and mirthfulness, that made him one of the most delightful persons that can well be imagined. "It is wonderful how much Aileen is changed! her way is so quiet—her eyes are not restless, and she has laid by her spindle to knit stockings for little Connor, when he is old enough to wear them—I wonder when will that be?—Hush! she is singing the little song that Marcus wrote."

And while Connor was speaking, Aileen entered the room; her look certainly wore a more composed aspect, but it was still wandering; her clothing too was more cared for, and her beautiful hair not only neatly arranged, but

bound round her head with a fillet of blue ribbon.

"How smart you look, Aileen!" said Connor to her.

"Yes," she said, mournfully, "Hector Lee tied Aileen's head with blue ribbon, because Aileen was crying this morning."

"And why was Aileen crying?" inquired Margaret.

"Because," she said, "it is harvest-time, and poor Ulick was born in harvest—yet he is not here now,"—and tears rolled down her cheeks.

"But, Aileen, you were singing just now."

"Yes,—shall Aileen sing babby's song again, —she loves babby."

The ready tears were chased away by the as ready smiles, and she sat down close to Margaret, and laying her bright, shining head on her lap, she sang the infant's song, which Connor delighted to think Marcus Roche had written in honour of his first-born.

"Lullaby, lullaby!
I have heard my own darling's first low cry,
As I stood, and trembled, the chamber nigh;
My sad heart beat, as I breathed a prayer—
The heart that another was come to share;
Yet to take the part that we both could spare!
Lullaby, lullaby!

Lullaby, lullaby!
But I heard my baby's voice with a sigh;
The plant that gave birth to the bud might die!
With an aching heart I had heard my boy;
And I spoke in a tone that spoke no joy,
Pray heaven, the babe is not sent to destroy!
Lullaby, lullaby!

Lullaby, lullaby!
But when the weak mother all sweetly smiled,
And gave to my arms my own living child,—
She smiled, and I saw that my fears were vain!
Though its new-born voice may have told of pain,
'Twas music to me when I heard it again!
Lullaby, lullaby!"

"Thank you, Aileen," said Marcus, when she had finished; "you must sing that for Father Horragan the next time he asks you; Aileen must always sing when she is asked.

"If you plase, ma'am," said a bare-legged (not bare-footed) maid-servant, poking her head in through the half-open door, "I'm sorry to the heart for it, but the speckled cow got her head (bad cess to it!) over the garden gate, which Jackey Miller has been tould these three days to hammer the nail in, which, sir, he put off doing, as he does sometimes when it's his luck to take a drop, which isn't often—and I'd be sorry to say a word aginst him—only he

has an eye (Jackey has but the one, sir) afther ould Monica Murphey's granddaughter, which is a burning shame, ma'am, and she but a slip ov a girl, growing up under the noses of her elders, to say nothing of her betters, in a rude way—which isn't manners, ma'am,—only, to be sure, your favour, ma'am, makes her take airs on herself, and so——"

"What are you driving at, Norry?"

"Jacky's one eye, masther, if you plase, sir," replied Norah, advancing a little farther, and dropping a curtsey.

"But you need not do that," said Flora, "when he has but one."

"O Miss Flory, I ax yer pardon, ma'am, Mrs. Marcus Roche, as the postman says it is, —you're mighty pleasant and handy with the joke, and the merriment, and all innocent, plisant divilry."

"Thank you, Norah."

"Kindly welcome, ma'am, said Norah," dropping another curtsey; "and sure, miss—ma'am, it would be cruel in me to do you injustice, if it was only on account of the goslings, or the turkeys, that are thriving so, on the stubble, which the masther, God bless him! never rakes, like some tame nagurs."

"But, Norah," interrupted Margaret, "you

began with the speckled cow putting her head over the garden gate——"

"O, all holies betwixt us and harem, so I did, ma'am, and I only wish I could end there, on account of Masther Hector's beautiful shirts, whin I pulled them out of the tub this morning—it was gone six, for the days do be getting short."

"More than your story is," said Flora.

"Now, ma'am, Mistress Marcus Roche, let us alone, iv you plase; and I tould the postman, (he's as civil spoken a man as iver com out ov Blarney, is Pat Langan, and can read all the letters he carries through one another without specs, and he turned seventy if he's a day.")

"That's kind of him," said Connor, drily.

"Troth, masther, it's wonderful, he's a larned man is Langan, and first cousin by the mother's side to Pat Langan, the Irish *haro* that beat Crib to smashes."

"But the spotted cow, I wish you would keep to her," said Margaret.

"I'd be long sorry, misthress dear, as I said whin I see masther's Marcelle—what-you-call-it waistcoat going down her throat, and nothing to stop it, and masther Hector's shirts foaming at her mouth——"

"The English of it is, I suppose," said Margaret, who, like everybody else who lives in Ireland, must be content to put up with the annoyance which odd, obstinate, perplexing, amusing servants create;—"the English of it is, I suppose, that in opposition to my commands, you put the linen to bleach on my lawn, and the cow, not being properly fastened, has eaten the linen."

"Just it thin, misthress; see that now, barring the opposition, which I don't take to myself at all, for it wasn't I, but the girl put it there——"

"But," interrupted Margaret, "I forbade you to do it at all."

"In the day I know you did, ma'am, but sure the night's not the day."

Flora laughed at Norah's ingenuity, and Margaret went to ascertain the extent of the injury.

"Marcus," said Flora, "I wish you would just write down every word Norah has uttered, as a sample of Irish perspicuity of style."

"For shame, Flora!"

"O Masther Marcus, if you put me in a book," said Norah, "I'll never forgive you, sir; there's none of my family desarve such a punishment as that—all quiet, dacent people—not

one of them ever left the counthry except afther the ruction, whin Gineral Hoult was glorifying the counthry; and sure it was, as my mother said, the pathriotism——"

"Norah," interrupted Connor, "I think you presume too much on being an old servant, you know how displeased your mistress is, and yet you take it as easy——"

"Law, sir, masther dear! I'm heavy sorry, but all the tears in Aileen's eyes won't bring the shirts back."

"I'll turn over a new leaf."

"Masther dear,—don't—you've turned over a grate many, and we're the talk of the counthry as it is——"

"Is the postman come?" inquired Marcus.

"Sure I knew I had that to tell," replied the provoking Norah, "only I forgot it;—he's waiting within."

"Well, let him wait," said Connor.

"Yes, sir," replied Norah; "I 'll tell him what you say, master. It 's little he used to think of waiting the length of a long summer's day, until the misthress put it into his head that *time was money*, and there's *no hay* with the way he keeps on now—bothering; and his wife gay as a paycock with the money he makes out of the odds and ends of the hours, and the

misthress at the head of it all," and Norah disappeared to acquaint the improving postman that he must wait.

"Let us hear what you have written to Peter," said Connor.

And Flora snatched the letter from Marcus. "Hum—hum!" she muttered, while her dark eyes danced over the pages—"here, to be sure, is my husband's usual quantity of patriotism."

"And a good thing it is," said Connor, "and I only wish that the number of patriots, who, like Marcus, have a heart to feel and a head to think, may go on increasing, for the one does little without the other. Why, it's wonderful, quite wonderful, the good a trifle of money judiciously laid out does among the poor."

"And here," she continued, without noticing Connor's interruption, "here is his usual quantity of poetry——"

"What, about my boy?" inquired Connor, eagerly.

"Psha!" exclaimed Flora; "no; but I will read you the conclusion of his most flowery epistle. By the way, Marcus, do you expect little Peter Swan to understand this?—Here, Margaret, if you have done reproving the carelessness of your domestics, I pray you attend."

Margaret entered, and Flora read—

"'We are each, I assure you, in the enjoyment of as perfect happiness as can fall to the lot of human beings; I have sufficient leisure to attend to my numerous pursuits; I am forming an *Hortus-siccus* of Irish plants, and proceeding rapidly with——'

"That's Latin," said Flora, "and even if I could read it, I would pretend not to be able to do so; the men never like a woman who sports Latin."

She continued,—"'As to my dear Flora, I did *not* take your advice; you said you would as soon marry a whirlwind,' (the little brute!) 'but I find her only a zephyr, bearing perfume and happiness to my bosom!' (Marcus, how clever you are, and what sweet nonsense you write!) 'As to Margaret and Connor, it is, indeed, joy-giving to witness their union; her gentle firmness, her good sense, her affection for her adopted country, her devotion to her husband, are the admiration of all who know her. Connor is bold and brave as ever, but it is astonishing the power he has gained over his companions, by uniting discretion to those qualities which belong almost exclusively to his countrymen. It is a blessed thing to see so much love, and peace, and tenderness dwelling beneath their roof.'

"You have said nothing about Norah and the cow," put in Flora; but as her eye rested on her sister, she saw tears making their way down her cheeks, and the same moment Connor pressed her to his heart.

"It's true for him!" he exclaimed proudly; "it's owing to your influence that I am held up by the gentry,—by the poor and the rich, as the model of an Irish farmer;—you combated the evil, and cherished the good—you, Margaret, shone like the sun—you made me feel—"

"The Groves of Blarney, they are so charming,"

sung Aileen, as she glided into the room; and Connor repeated the line with an emphasis which evinced that the Groves of Blarney were to him a terrestrial paradise.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

As those who have read my story may desire to make acquaintance with a few facts connected with the localities I have chosen for it, I will not apologise for borrowing from my friend Mr. Crofton Croker so much of his "Researches" as may answer my purpose.

"Blarney Castle was built about the middle of the fifteenth century, by Cormac Mac Carty, or Carthy, surnamed Laider, or the Strong. He was descended from the kings of Cork, and was esteemed so powerful a chieftain, that the English settlers in his part of Munster paid him an annual tribute of forty pounds, to protect them from the attacks and insults of the Irish. To him is also ascribed the building of the Abbey and Castle of Kilcrea, the nunnery of Ballyvacadine, and many other religious houses, in the former of which he was buried. It would be a matter of

little importance and considerable labour to trace the Castle of Blarney from one possessor to another. The genealogical table in Keating's History of Ireland will enable those addicted to research to follow the Mac Carty pedigree; but a tiresome repetition of names, occasioned by the scantiness of them in an exceedingly numerous family, presents continual causes of perplexity to the general reader. The names of Donough, Cormac, Teig, Florence, Dermot, Owen, and Donnell, constitute almost the whole catalogue used by the Mac Cartys for a period exceeding six hundred years. This difficulty is heightened from the entire sept being, in point of fact, without a sirname, as the followers of most chieftains in Ireland as well as Scotland assumed that of their lord. In the reign of Edward the Fourth a statute was enacted, commanding each individual to take upon himself a separate sirname, "either of his trade and faculty, or of some quality of his body or mind, or the place where he dwelt, so that every one should be distinguished from the other." But this statute did not effect the object proposed, and Spenser, in his View of Ireland, mentions it as having become obsolete, and strongly recommends its renewal.

As a sketch of the history of the Muskery branch of the Mac Carty family affords an opportunity of illustrating many important events in the south of Ireland, perhaps no apology will be necessary for the introduction of it in the account of Blarney, which was their principal residence. The original name of a sept

or clan was Carty, supposed to be derived from Cartheigh, which signifies an inhabitant of the rock, and Mac, denoting "son of," was used before the father's christian name for the purpose of distinction, as Mac Cormac Carty expressed Carty son of Cormac. This manner of designation appears discontinued on the introduction of a greater variety of names, and the Mac alone retained by the elder branches.

It is also necessary to remark, that the title of Muskery was assumed by the chief of that district from being lord of the soil. This also creates much confusion, as the same person is frequently called Carty, Mac Carty, and Lord Muskery; and when knighthood had been conferred, the title of Muskery was still retained with that of Sir, as Cormac Mac Teig Carty we find styled Sir Cormac Mac Teig Carty, Lord Muskery.

I offer as a matter of conjecture, that the title of Earl Clancarty, conferred on the Mac Carties by Charles the Second, had its origin in Lord of the Clan of Carty.

In 1542 an indenture of allegiance to the English laws was signed by Teig Mac Cormac Carty (Dom. de Muskery) amongst other Irish chieftains; and in 1558 his son Dermod was knighted at Limerick, on his submission, by Thomas Earl of Sussex, (the Lord Deputy,) who at the same time presented him with a gold chain and a pair of gilt spurs. This mark of favour was certainly merited, for the Muskery Mac Carties, unlike most other Irish clans, appear to have

strictly maintained their faith with the English, since the original submission of their ancestor, the king of Cork, to Henry II.

In1580, Sir James of Desmond, brother to the notorious earl, entered the district of Muskery, probably stimulated, in addition to his love of plunder, by envy of Cormac Mac Teig Carty, whom the Lord Deputy Mountjoy, in a letter to the council of England, mentions, "for loyalty and civil deportment, to be the rarest man that ever was born among the Irishry." Camden also notices him as a person "of great name" in Muskery, "which is a wild and woody country." But Sir James of Desmond sought his own destruction, as the Mac Carties not only defeated his party, leaving a hundred and fifty dead on the field, but took Sir James prisoner, who was delivered by the order of the lords judges to Sir Warham St. Leger and Captain (afterwards Sir) Walter Raleigh, by whom, in virtue of a special commission directed to them, he was tried as a traitor, and, being found guilty, was executed, and his head and quarters fixed on the gates of Cork.

For this service, Cormac Mac Teig Carty was knigbted by the lord justice, and made high sheriff of the county of Cork, with a commission of martial law, and power to grant protection for fifteen days to any but principal rebels.

On the 21st October, 1601, Cormac Mac Dermod Carty, commonly called Lord Muskery, attacked the Spanish trenches at Kinsale, in command of a party

of Irish, by order of Sir George Carew, (the lord president;) and though at first he drove the invaders before him, yet he soon retreated without much apparent cause, on which Sir William Godolphin, (who went into Ireland with the unfortunate Earl of Essex,) advanced and forced the Spaniards to retire. This circumstance, when so many Irish chieftains were in open rebellion, was sufficient to throw strong suspicions on the attachment of the Mac Carties to the English; and about the same time Teig Mac Cormac Carty, cousin to the Lord Muskery, deserted from Sir George Carew's troop to the enemy; but shortly after, either through policy or repentance, he addressed a letter to the lord president, dated from "Carrigafuky," the 9th June, 1602; a copy of which may be found in the Pacata Hibernia, expressing contrition for his conduct, and requesting, through Sir George's mediation, to be received again to the queen's favour.

The lord president, naturally feeling that little dependence could be placed on such a person, gave a decided refusal to his petition, and Teig Mac Cormac Carty had recourse, for procuring his pardon, to the dishonourable means of betraying the confidence of his kinsman Lord Muskery, and accused him of corresponding with the Spanish and Italian governments, and of having received from the former eight thousand ducats, for which sum he had promised to deliver his castle of Blarney into their hands.

This information, corroborating that derived from other sources, and strengthened by many circum-

stances, completely served to establish Lord Muskery's disaffection on the mind of the president, who concluded on apprehending him as a traitor, yet dreaded using forcible measures, knowing his clan to be one of the most powerful in Ireland, and capable of offering an obstinate resistance, which would doubtless receive foreign as well as internal support. Lord Muskery was stated to have a thousand well-armed followers in readiness for action, and it was known could command the services of the clans of Reardin, Murphy, and Sweeny of Muskery, with the O'Learies, O'Mahonies, and O'Driscolls of Carbery. He was also possessed of many castles, particularly those of Kilcrea, Macroom, and Blarney, which latter is described, at that time, as being one of the strongest in the province of Munster; "for it is four piles joined in one, seated upon a main rock, so as it is free from mining, the wall eighteen feet thick, and flanked at each corner to the best advantage." Stratagem was therefore resorted to, and Sir Charles Wilmot and Captain Roger Harvey, with part of their companies, despatched from Cork to endeavour to surprise Blarney; but in this they failed, the wardens being on the alert, who compelled them to receive without the walls some refreshment which they requested.

Lord Muskery was, however, taken and brought before the president and council of Cork. He repelled with indignation the charge of treason, called himself a slandered and injured man, declared the whole a conspiracy of his enemies, and concluded by re-

nouncing all claim to favour or pardon, if the charge could be supported by lawful testimony. The president replied coolly to his vehement protestations, and urged him, if guilty, freely to confess his guilt, and entreat the queen's mercy; or, if innocent, that he should deliver his castle of Blarney into the hands of trustees, who would hold it until the charges against him were disproved. Lord Muskery hesitated, and was in consequence committed to gaol, where he was detained heavily ironed. Finding himself so much in the president's power, and perhaps somewhat intimidated by his temperate yet inflexible conduct, Lord Muskery at length consented to surrender up Blarney to Captain Taffe, in whom he reposed much confidence, on a promise of its being restored to him in an unaltered condition. His abbey and castle of Kilcrea was delivered to Captain Francis Slingsbie, and a considerable force was sent under Captain Flower and Sir Charles Wilmot to reduce Macroom, from which, on account of its situation, an obstinate resistance was expected.

In the mean time Lord Muskery's wife and younger children were taken and confined at Cork, and his followers employed a confidential man, named John O'Healy, to convey the eldest son, Cormac Oge Carty, (then a student at Oxford,) secretly from England, and to communicate with the Spanish government. The president, having received information of these plans, seized O'Healy on ship-board as he was leaving Cork harbour, who, to prevent discovery, flung into

the sea a bag containing his despatches and money, so that no secret was divulged, and no further proof than the act existed to criminate him. O'Healy was thrown into prison, and Lord Muskery more closely guarded than ever. "If shackles of iron, walls of stone, and force of men can make him sure," said his gaoler in reply to the lord president's charge, "then shall my prisoner be forthcoming whensoever the state may be pleased to call for him." Sir George Carew's charge was repeated and enforced to the goaler both by the Bishop of Cork and Dominick Sarsfield, the queen's attorney for Munster, who commanded him to keep Lord Muskery "in a handlock with his own servant, or some soldier of especial trust." Two days after this last caution, Lord Muskery escaped! He contrived, between eight and nine o'clock in the evening, to force himself out of a window and descend into the street, where "were divers mantlemen to receive him." The alarm was given almost instantly, and a vigorous pursuit commenced,—but in vain; favoured by a dark night, and with a perfect knowledge of the country, protected by a select band of men, (each of whom would have laid down his life in defence of their lord,) and surrounded by hundreds who were willing to favour and assist his flight, it is not surprising, having once passed the iron grate of his prison, he should baffle even the most active pursuit. The president immediately issued letters to Sir Charles Wilmot, (who still lay before Macroom,) that if he could not gain the castle that night, he should raise the

siege, and retreat the next morning; but, almost in the same hour these orders arrived, Macroom Castle accidentally caught fire, and the besieged, as a last resource, took refuge on the lawn, where most of them (about fifty) were put to the sword.

On the news of Lord Muskery's escape, O'Sullivan of Beare, Captain Terril, and others in rebellion, offered to support him against the lord president; but Lord Muskery, after a conference with the latter, considering that he had little prospect of ultimate success, and that both his family and estates were in the president's power, determined on making terms, and wrote requesting permission to throw himself at Sir George Carew's feet; which request was granted.

This submission was both sincere and permanent, as we find him and his clan shortly afterwards actively employed under Sir Charles Wilmot in various military exploits; and it would appear some confidence was placed in Lord Muskery, he being summoned to parliament as Baron of Blarney.

History is silent respecting the Mac Carties for about forty years. The first information, in the south of Ireland, of the insurrection of 1641, was communicated to Lord Cork, during dinner-time, at Castle Lyons, his son-in-law the Earl of Barrymore's house, where a large company of Irish chiefs were assembled. Donough Lord Muskery was among the number, and treated the account as an exaggerated tale; but the other guests, anticipating serious consequences, separated abruptly, and returned immediately to pre-

pare their respective residences for defence. Lord Muskery's conduct on this occasion appears an act of the deepest dissimulation; for in a few days he was at the head of several thousand Irish. On the death of Sir William St. Leger, Lord Muskery, whom Ludlow styles "an Irish rebel," assumed or was appointed to the presidency of Munster by Charles I., notwithstanding the solicitations and claims of Lord Inchiquin, son-in-law to the former president, for that office, which mortified Lord Inchiquin so much, that he immediately declared for the parliament. The character of Lord Muskery during this distracting period, when the royal and parliament parties were subdivided into many others, that more than once changed sides, and fought against the banners under which they had first appeared, was marked by a love of discipline, a high sense of honour, and strong feelings of humanity. Personal bravery can scarcely be enumerated a virtue, when every man of that day was of necessity a soldier, and Ireland presented a scene of petty and treacherous, certainly the most dreadful state of warfare. In the beginning of 1646, Lord Broghill, afterwards the celebrated Earl of Orrery, took the castle of Blarney, which he seems subsequently to have occasionally made his quarters. A printed letter to William Lenthall, the Speaker, from Lord Broghill, is preserved in the British Museum, dated *Blairney*, 1st August, 1651, giving an account of a battle between him and Lord Muskery. Smith, in his History of Cork, also mentions a manuscript at Lismore in his

lordship's own writing, containing an account of the same battle, which is exceedingly curious and interesting.

Muskery, who had been obliged to abandon his castles, and retire from the parliamentary forces into the fastnesses of Derry, made an attempt to relieve Limerick, which was closely besieged by Ireton, when Lord Broghill, after manœuvring some days, intercepted him on his march near Courtstown, sometimes called Knocknaclashy.

The features of this action are so full of romantic reality, that I cannot pass them over without a short notice, though at the risk of my narrative being considered tedious. Broghill came up with the advanced part of Muskery's force "about midnight, in the midst of a dreadful storm of rain and wind," and that night the opposing troops lay so near "as to see each other's fires reciprocally." In the morning, Lord Broghill advanced and crossed the river Blackwater, when he was met by many groups of peasants, some of whom he questioned as to the cause of their assembling, and received for answer, that it was to witness a battle which had long been prophesied should be fought on that ground. When his lordship asked them which side was to gain the victory, they shook their heads, and said, "The English are to get the day."—"Our word," adds Lord Broghill, "was prosperity,—theirs St. James; our signal, white in hats,—theirs, greene fearne."

It was a desperately contested fight; at one time the Irish advanced on Lord Broghill's right wing

with a thousand musketeers, and, to use his lordship's words, "with their horse, fought horse-head to horse-head, hacking with their swords. Not a horse officer of the Irish," continues Lord Broghill, "except one, but he or his horse was killed or wounded. All the first rank in my squadron, being thirty-three, were either killed or wounded. We resolved not to give or take quarter; however, several had quarter after the battle. Among the baggage was found a peck-full of charms, relics, &c., besides an infinite quantity taken from the dead, with a peculiar one on paper, said to be the exact measure of Our Lady's foot, and written in it, 'Whoever wears this, and repeats certain prayers, shall be free from gun-shot, sword, and pike,' respectively, as each desired. Like the battle of Naseby, from a fair day it rained hard during the fight, with thunder and lightning, and afterwards cleared up again." Lord Broghill tells us, that his "boldest horse, being twice wounded, became so fearful, that he was turned to the coach."

From this account it is evident the conflict was sanguinary in the extreme. Muskery is reported to "have escaped narrowly, and Lieutenant Colonel Mac Gillicuddy (who commanded young Muskery's regiment, and a man more popular than Muskery himself in his own country) was made prisoner with Major Mac Gillariagh, an old Spanish soldier, and other officers of note.

"We had a very fair execution for above three miles," writes Lord Broghill in his letter to the

Speaker, " and indeed it was bloody ; for I gave orders to kill all, though some few prisoners of good quality were saved. All their foot field-officers charged on foot with pikes in their hands, so that few of them got off, it being too farre from any bogs or woods, which they say they selected purposely that their men might have no confidence but in their courages ; but we relied on a better strength than the arm of flesh, and when their strength failed, ours did not fail us. Their priests, all the way before they came to fight, encouraged them by speeches, but especially by sprinkling holy water on them, and by charms, of which I herewith send a copy ; (many of them were found quilted in the doublets of the dead.) Certainly they are a people strangely given over to destruction, who, though otherwise understanding enough, let themselves be still deluded by ridiculous things, and by more ridiculous persons. Had I been one of the charmed, I would have first tried mine on the priest who gave it."

This battle hastened the surrender of Limerick to Ireton, who received Lord Broghill, on his arrival there, with a complimentary *feu-de-joie*. Shortly after, Lord Muskery was apprehended, and tried for his life, on the charge of having murdered several English, but, being acquitted, was allowed to pass into Spain ; and an order was made by the commissioners for the parliament that Lord Muskery's lady should enjoy all her husband's estates, except a thou-

sand a year, which had been granted to Lord Broghill for his services, by order dated 8th September, 1656.

An exile, and deprived of fortune, Lord Muskery endeavoured to procure a commission in the French service, but was recalled on the Restoration, and the active part he had taken in the royal cause rewarded by his being exalted, in 1658, Viscount Muskery and Earl of Clancarty; and four years after a bill of indemnity was passed by both Houses of Parliament, through the interest of Lord Ormond, securing all his honours and estates to him and his posterity, with the exception of that part in the possession of Lord Broghill, who had become a firm partisan of Charles the Second. Lord Clancarty had three sons—Charles, Callaghan, and Justin. Charles Lord Muskery (a great favourite of the Duke of York, afterwards James the Second) was killed in a sea-fight against the Dutch, on the 3rd of June, 1665, and was buried with honours in Westminster Abbey. His father lived after him only two months; and the title of Clancarty descended, on the death of Charles James, the infant son of Lord Muskery, to his brother Callaghan, who had retired into a convent in France. Callaghan, the third earl, was succeeded by his only son, Donough. He was educated at Oxford under the Archbishop of Canterbury, and privately married, when only sixteen, to the Earl of Sunderland's daughter, after which he went into Ireland, where he continued a Protestant till the arrival of James the

Second. James landed at Kinsale on Wednesday, the 12th of March, 1688, and was received and entertained by Lord Clancarty, whom he created one of the lords of the bed-chamber, and, by letters patent, clerk of the crown and peace for Munster. James also gave him a troop of horse, in command of which he is charged with having committed many acts of wanton cruelty. On the Snnday following his arrival, James, supported by two Franciscan friars, and attended by Lord Clancarty and many priests in their orders, publicly heard mass performed in Cork; and Lord Clare, the governor, caused all Protestants who remained in the city to be committed to prison,—the churches in Cork, the castles of Blarney, Macroom, and the others belonging to Lord Clancarty, being used as places of confinement. On the surrender of Cork to the Duke of Marlborough in 1691, Lord Clancarty, amongst others, was taken at the capture of the old fort; and notwithstanding the exertions made by his father-in-law, the Earl of Sunderland, to procure his pardon, a representation drawn up by Sir Richard Cox, (the historian, then second justice of the Common Pleas,) stating the excesses of which Lord Clancarty had been guilty, and the conspicuous part he had taken in the measures of James, was not to be overruled, and the title and estates of Clancarty were declared forfeited to the crown. It should be mentioned, to the honour of King William's government, that a considerable tract of the forfeited ground was granted to a poor butcher at Mallow, who had

fallen a victim to Lord Clancarty's ferocity; the remainder was sold, with other property similarly circumstanced, at Chichester-house, Dublin, and the sale-book is preserved in the library of the King's Inns.

A pension of three hundred a year was allowed to this unfortunate nobleman, on condition of his quitting the kingdom. "With this," says Smith, "he retired to Hamburgh, on the Elbe, and purchased a little island at the mouth of that river from the citizens of Ancona, which went by his name. There he erected a convenient dwelling-house, with a range of storehouses, and formed a useful garden. In this place he made a considerable profit by shipwrecks, but continued to give the distressed all the assistance in his power, and saved the lives of many. His profit arose from the goods thrown on his island, which he placed in his store-houses; and if demanded by the right owners within the year, he returned them, requiring only two per cent. for the store-room —if not, he made use of them as his own. He died here October the 22nd, 1734, aged sixty-four, leaving two sons,—Robert, a captain in the English navy, commonly called Lord Muskery, and Justin Mac Carty, Esq. Lord Muskery having fallen under suspicions of being attached to the House of Stuart, "which had on a former occasion," remarks Charnock in his Biographia Navalis, "proved the ruin of his father, was ordered to be struck off the list of naval officers on the 10th of July, 1749." He afterwards entered into a foreign service.

Such is the history of the once powerful Mac Cartys of Muskery; that of the other branches of the same family, as well as of most Irish clans, closely resemble it; attainder, forfeiture of property, and exile, form the melancholy termination of each; and the circumstances and situations which have arisen and still arise out of such violent events are numerous and deeply affecting. Instances have occurred where the lineal descendants of the most distinguished houses have laboured from day to day for precarious support on the lands over which their ancestors exercised unlimited sovereignty. A pathetic incident connected with the Mac Cartys has such claims on the feelings, that I will not conclude this narrative of their fortunes without the mention of it. A considerable part of the forfeited estates of that family in the county of Cork was held by Mr. S—— about the middle of the last century. Walking one evening in his demesne, he observed a figure, apparently asleep, at the foot of an aged tree, and, on approaching the spot, found an old man extended on the ground, whose audible sobs proclaimed the severest affliction. Mr. S—— inquired the cause, and was answered, "Forgive me, sir; my grief is idle, but to mourn is a relief to the desolate heart and the humble spirit. I am a Mac Carty, once the possessor of that castle, now in ruins, and of this ground; this tree was planted by my own hands, and I have returned to water its roots with my tears. To-morrow I sail for Spain, where I have long been an exile and

an outlaw since the Revolution. I am an old man, and to-night, probably for the last time, bid farewell to the place of my birth and the home of my forefathers."

The military and historic recollections connected with Blarney are doubtless of sufficient importance to give an interest to the place; but to a curious superstition it is perhaps more indebted for celebrity. A stone in the highest part of the castle wall is pointed out to visitors, which is supposed to give to whoever kisses it the peculiar privilege of deviating from veracity with unblushing countenance, whenever it may be convenient — hence the well-known phrase of "Blarney."

The grounds attached to the castle, as I before observed, though so little attended to, are still beautiful. Walks, which a few years since were neat and trim, are now so overrun with brambles and wild flowers as to be passed with difficulty. Much wood has also been cut down, and the statues, so ridiculously enumerated in a popular song, removed A picturesque bridge, too, which led to the castle, has been swept away by the wintry flood; and, with the exception of a small dell called the Rock Close, everything seems changed for the worse. In this romantic spot, nature and art (a combination rather uncommon in pleasure-grounds) have gone hand in hand. Advantage has been taken of accidental circumstances to form tasteful and characteristic combinations, and it is really a matter of difficulty at first to determine what is pri-

mitive, and what the produce of design. The delusion is even heightened by the present total neglect. You must come unexpectedly into this little shaded nook, and stand upon a natural terrace above the river, which glides as calmly as possible beneath. Here, if you feel inclined, a rustic couch of rock, all festooned with moss and ivy, is at your service; but if adventurous feelings urge you to explore farther, a discovery is made of an almost concealed irregularly excavated passage through the solid rock, which is descended by a rude flight of stone steps, called the "witch's stairs," and you emerge *sul margine d'un rio*, over which depend some light and graceful trees. It is indeed a fairy scene, and I know of no place where I could sooner imagine these little elves holding their moonlight revelry.

THE END.

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